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OPINION METER
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INSIDE

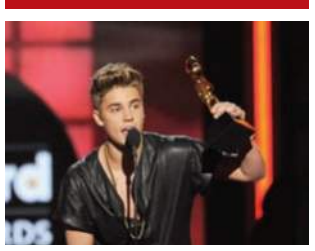
BUSINESS

Americans are more hopeful about the economy than at any other point in five years. ➤ PAGE 13

NATION

A CSX freight train crashes into a trash truck, derails and catches fire in Baltimore. ➤ PAGE 16

LIFE & STYLE



Los Angeles detectives investigate Justin Bieber for reckless driving. ➤ PAGE 19

'Not too late TO SAVE the FUND'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Last week's *Saipan Tribune* online poll asked the question: With 10 months to go before its projected collapse, do you think the NMI Retirement Fund can still be saved?

Majority of the respondents, totaling 95, said "no" while 52 said "yes." There were 14 who answered "unsure" while five had no opinion on the matter.

James F. McMahon, 67, counts him-

See FUND on Page 4

NMC board says it will not intervene

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Lizama

The chairman of the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents described yesterday the non-renewal of faculty members Larry Lee and Kyle Podziewski as the prerogative of the college administration and said the board will not intervene in the matter.

Juan T. Lizama also emphasized the

See NMC on Page 4

Buckingham's non-arrest at airport being looked at

Buckingham

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Attorney General Joey Patrick San Nicolas said yesterday that his office would investigate and seek answers to one of the biggest questions related to the return of former attorney general Edward Buckingham: How did the high-profile fugitive manage to go in and out of the airport without being arrested, given the outstanding warrants against him?

The Office of the Attorney General investigation, however, is not only

See BUCKINGHAM on Page 4

Five lasses join search for LibDay Queen 2013

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

This year's search for Liberation Day Queen will be among five candidates, who were introduced yesterday during a pinning ceremony at the Saipan Mayor's Office.

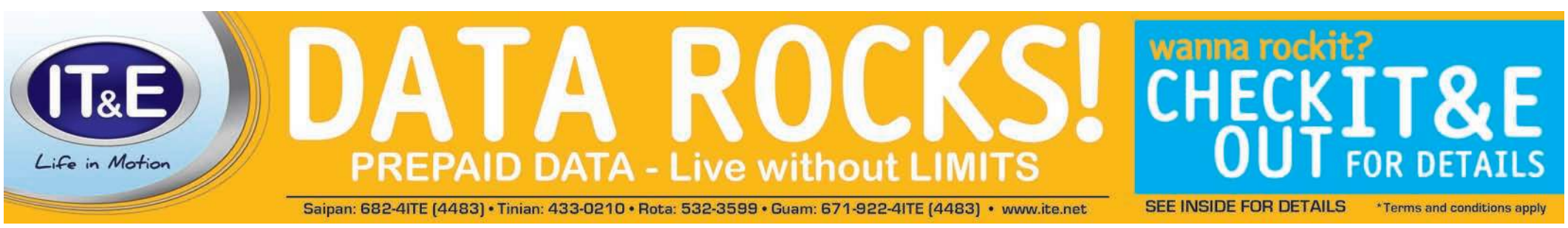
This year's contenders are Annalyn Jovannah Cabrera, Rea-Lei L. Iskawa, Melody Margaret Johnson, Sina Ha'ani Ulloa Palacios, and Nicole Ichihara Sablan.

Led by Saipan Mayor Donald Flores and Liberation Day committee chair and president Vicente Camacho, the pinning ceremony also recognized the candidates' families and friends who trooped to the event in a show of support.

Cabrera, 18, is an 11th grader at Kagman High School. She is the daughter of Josephine

See LIBDAY on Page 4

MONETH G. DEPOSA
The five candidates in this year's search for Liberation Day Queen pose after the pinning ceremony yesterday. From left are Nicole Ichihara, Sina Ha'ani Ulloa Palacios, Melody Margaret Johnson, Rea-Lei Iskawa, and Annalyn Jovannah Cabrera.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Local

DPS unveils new TOPS office in Garapan

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety made official yesterday the opening of its Tourism Oriented Policing Section, a new unit that aims to protect tourists and residents in the area designated as the Garapan revitalization district.

DPS Commissioner James C. Deleon Guerrero, Rep. Christopher Leon Guerrero (Cov-Saipan), and Duty Free Shoppers Saipan Limited president Marian Aldan-Pierce led the unveiling of the TOPS sign at its office, one of the houses of the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. in Lower Miha.

TOPS is a partnership project with the Marianas Visitors Authority, DFS, and other businesses within the Garapan district.

In his remarks, Deleon Guerrero said that TOPS came about as a result of his discussions with Sgt. Arnold Seman and Detective Jeffrey Olopai.

Deleon Guerrero said the idea was how to come up with a program that would protect tourists as well as residents in Garapan. In order to realize the project, they had to reinstate the bike patrol so they trained police officers and firefighters and certified them.

These bike patrols, Deleon Guerrero said, are now patrolling the expanded map of the designated Garapan revitalization district.

With TOPS, Deleon Guerrero said they would like to see the area as a safe zone where tourists and residents can walk free from harassment from criminals or potential criminals.

If the project is successful, TOPS will serve as a model for other areas in the CNMI.

TOPS officer-in-charge Sgt. Seman said the project was an effort to look into the issues and concerns that relate to tourists.

Seman said TOPS consists of frontline bike patrol officers out of the Koban Office as well as the partnership with the Commonwealth Bureau of Investigation, formerly the Criminal Investigation Bureau.

Seman said that when TOPS entertain cases that relate to tourists, detectives there are readily available because they operate 24 hours a day.

He said the investigation will be expedited, hoping that cases will be resolved before the departure from the CNMI of tourists who become victims of crimes.

The NMHC board approved DPS' request to use two of its housing units for TOPS.

Seman disclosed that since they occupied the building last month, he noted a tremendous decline in tourist-related crimes.

"The presence really does make a difference," he said. "We run 24 hours. There are officers here even peak hours, late hours. Officers are patrolling the area not just in the tourist district but even the entire Garapan district."

MVA managing director Perry Tenorio said he is glad that he was there to witness the opening of TOPS office.

" I'm very happy to always working closely with DPS to address the issues that are affecting our travel industry," Tenorio said.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

DPS Commissioner James C. Deleon Guerrero, Rep. Christopher Leon Guerrero (Cov-Saipan), Duty Free Shoppers Saipan Limited president Marian Aldan-Pierce, and MVA managing director Perry Tenorio unveil the Tourism Oriented Policing Section in Lower Miha.

Bearden makes a case for connecting large power users to CUC

By REINA S. PEREZ
STUDENT REPORTER

Diesel exhaust emitted by power plants consists of gaseous pollutants, particulate matter, and toxic pollutants that pose a threat to public health, according to Lt. Cdr. Brian Bearden of the U.S. Public Health Commissioned Corps.

In his presentation for the Saipan Rotary Club on Tuesday, Bearden said the short-term health effects of diesel exhaust include respiratory problems such as chronic bronchitis, increased asthma, and irritation, cardiovascular effects, and premature death for those with an existing heart and lung disease. A major long-term health effect is the development of cancer.

And the health threat doesn't necessarily come from the power plants of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Bearden said that short-term health effects can be caused by a small diesel backup generator located 15 feet from a window. Long-term health effects can be caused by two adjacent hotel resorts that run their own backup generators, he added.

According to Bearden, the actual risk factor for long-term health effects depends on the exposure duration, emissions rate of the generator, and the age of the affected individual.

CUC's generators do pose a health risk but, according to Bearden, these affect only a smaller population than the population affected by the generators used by hotels.

Technological attempts to mitigate these health risks include engine retrofits that reduce particulate matter by 20 to 95 percent, he said. Another attempt is to purchase new generators. This reduces the particular matter by 93 percent only. A last attempt is to raise stack heights, but Bearden pointed out that meeting the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for particulate matter does not address the cancer risk.

Policy mitigations include connecting large users to CUC to eliminate health risk and nuances, regulating the installation of backup generators, enforce EAP Tiers requirements on imported generators, and require higher tier controls (Tier 4) for backup generators, as some states have already done, Bearden said.

Bearden is with the U.S. Public Health Commissioned Corps assigned to CUC and was the guest speaker at the Saipan Rotary Club meeting on Tuesday, May 28.

Zoning's Blanco sues BOE's Ada over ownership of land, house

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Zoning Board chair Diego C. Blanco has filed a lawsuit against a former girlfriend, Board of Education member Maria Lourdes S. Ada, over their dispute on the ownership of a house and land.

Diego Blanco's sister, Ana C. Blanco, joined the lawsuit as coplaintiff. They are suing Ada for misrepresentation and fraud.

Ada declined to comment yesterday, saying she has to meet her legal counsel to discuss the case.

In their complaint filed Tuesday, the Blancos asked the Superior Court to rescind the transfer of the real property and cancel the warranty deed. The Blancos also asked the court to order Ada to return the property to Ana Blanco.

In the alternative, the plaintiffs asked the court to hold Ada liable to pay them monetary judgment in an amount equal to the fair market value that she allegedly received for the land, house, and any other improvements.

The Blancos also demanded damages for loss of benefit in the use of the property, court costs, and other fees.

According to the complaint, Diego Blanco and Ada, who were at that time in a relationship, agreed to build a house together on a piece of lot in As Lito that Diego Blanco inherited and that he had earlier conveyed to his sister, Ana, who agreed to hold and care for the land on his behalf.

Ada allegedly further stated that she could secure a bank loan to build the house.

After he made a $15,000 down payment for the pre-fabricated construction materials from Australia, Diego Blanco learned that Ada's loan application to the Bank of Guam was denied.

Diego Blanco said he still proceeded with the construction of the house and finished building it in the early part of 2004.

In addition to the $70,000 personal loan that Diego Blanco procured, he claimed to have spent another $55,000 for the construction of the 2,781 square meter house, for a total cost of $125,000.

Ada subsequently secured a $200,000 loan from Bank of Saipan, which was made possible by mortgaging Diego Blanco's As Lito property.

Diego Blanco said out of the $200,000 loan, $70,000 was paid toward the personal loan that he procured to construct the house.

Diego Blanco said the remaining $130,000 was either used by Ada for her own personal benefit or unaccounted for.

Diego Blanco alleged that between 2004 and 2008 he continued to remind Ada that she has to re-convey the As Lito property back to his sister, Ana, as she had promised. Diego Blanco said Ada would just respond by saying, "It's our house!"

In late 2008, Diego Blanco and Ada's relationship soured and eventually ended. He moved out of the As Lito house.

The Blancos said that, sometime in late 2008 they learned that Ada refused and has no intention of keeping her promise to return/re-convey the land back to Ana.

The Blancos stated that on the understanding that Ada only needed the property under her name for the sole purpose of securing a mortgage loan from the bank, they "reposed in defendant their utmost trust and confidence prior to executing the warranty deed."

Ways and Means weighs DPS budget request

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

House Ways and Means Committee chair Tony Sablan (IR-Saipan) said yesterday that his panel is weighing the Department of Public Safety's request for additional funding beyond the $8 million that the governor submitted to the Legislature for its operations and personnel in fiscal year 2014.

» **Panel seeks questions on proposed private counsel funding**

Sablan, however, said that DPS Commissioner James Deleon Guerrero recognized that the government remains under tight budget. He said DPS originally asked the governor for $10 million for 2014.

"I believe the bulk of that difference between DPS' proposed budget and the governor's submission is the elimination of a lot of vacant FTE positions," Sablan said.

In the end, the DPS commissioner, in responding to the Ways and Means Committee's question, said the department can live within the estimated $8 million that the governor proposed.

"But again, DPS is asking whether there's a way to get a little more than that. The commissioner is hoping that the revenue-generating bills will be signed into law so there will be more funding for different government programs and agencies such as DPS," he added.

Ways and Means Committee members also asked the DPS commissioner about proposed funding to hire a private counsel for a short-term basis, when the Office of the Attorney General is supposed to be providing legal advice to government agencies such as DPS.

Attorney General Joey Patrick San Nicolas, in a separate interview, said the OAG has been communicating with DPS as to their legal representation needs. He confirmed that the DPS commissioner seeks to hire a private attorney.

He said the OAG provides legal advice to every government agency.

San Nicolas said the DPS commissioner as an expenditure authority may hire a private counsel.

But the AG said there is one thing the OAG asks of the DPS commissioner if he pursues hiring of a private attorney.

"Even if he did do that, I would require that whoever does get hired as a legal counsel must be designated by our office an assistant attorney general because that is the [constitutional] responsibility of the attorney general," he said.

The OAG's designation is the same with other departments with legal counsels outside of the OAG.

"If CHC [as an example] decides to hire a legal counsel which they are authorized, I would require that whoever they do hire meet with me and then a designation be prepared similar to…when I designated legal counsels over OPA to authorize them to investigate and prosecute criminal matters and even in civil matters," he said.

Meanwhile, the House Ways and Means Committee continues its budget hearings today on certain agencies' funding requests.

Marpi landfill protest denied; DPW seeks contract award

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

» Losing bidder says they will appeal with OPA
» DPW to Procurement: CNMI risks EPA, DEQ sanctions

Procurement and Supply director Herman S. Sablan denied SARS/Success International Corp.'s protest on a Marpi landfill operation contract, prompting Department of Public Works Secretary Martin C. Sablan to recommend contract award to Tang's Corp. before June 1 to address health and safety concerns and avoid federal and local environmental agency sanctions.

Tangs Corp. offered DPW a best and final offer of $715,000 a year to operate the Marpi landfill, for a total of $2.145 million for three years.

Contract extension for up to two years is an option.

SARS has until next week to appeal the procurement director's decision with the Office of the Public Auditor.

Henry Miao, owner and general manager of SARS, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday they will file an appeal with OPA.

DPW's Sablan, however, cited negative impacts on residents' "health and safety" if SARS' "improper compaction" at the Marpi landfill continues.

SARS has a current equipment rental agreement with DPW, and that agreement expires tomorrow, May 31.

Procurement statutes allow contract awards pending resolution of protest and appeal if there is "urgent and compelling circumstances" that significantly affect CNMI interests.

In this case, DPW's Sablan said the urgent and compelling circumstances are the impacts on Saipan residents' "health and safety," as well as placing the CNMI in a "dangerous position" with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Division of Environmental Quality.

The procurement director has yet to decide on DPW's recommendation to award the contract immediately to Tangs Corp. as of yesterday.

The DPW secretary told the procurement director that DPW "ranked Tangs Corp. as the most technically acceptable respondent" to the RFP.

"We strongly recommend that award be made to Tangs Corp. prior to June 1, 2013, so that the interests of the CNMI are not negatively affected," DPW's Sablan told Procurement's Sablan in a May 28 letter.

'Let's move on'

Since last year, SARS has been providing equipment rental to DPW on a monthly or every two months basis, when original long-term landfill operator PDL decided not to renew its contract with DPW.

DPW issued a request for proposal for a long-term operation of the landfill, and the scope of work is way beyond equipment rental that SARS provides. Of the contractors that responded, Tangs Corp. and SARS were ranked in the competitive range. DPW later recommended contract award to Tangs Corp.

Rep. Ray Tebuteb (IR-Saipan) said yesterday "it's time to move on" with the Marpi landfill operation contract.

He, however, said the improper compaction issues at the Marpi landfill may not necessarily be the fault of SARS alone but also of agencies that are supposed to have oversight on the landfill operations such as DEQ and DPW.

Procurement rejects SARS protest

In a May 23 decision, Procurement's Sablan issued a five-page decision rejecting SARS' protest.

On the three specific issues SARS' protest, the procurement director said "price was not one of the evaluative criteria, Tangs has the requisite knowledge and qualifications to operate the landfill, and Tangs personnel were not responsible for the numerous DEQ violations."

"Tang's is the most technically acceptable respondent and the government its sole discretion has negotiated a price determined to be fair and reasonable," Procurement's Sablan said in his decision.

An appeal from the procurement director's decision must be received by OPA not later than 10 days after receipt of the May 23 procurement decision.

Procurement's Sablan said the RFP had two evaluative factors: background and experience, and operational plan.

The RFP stipulated that DPW would negotiate with the highest qualified firm for a "price determined to be fair and reasonable to the government under [its] sole discretion."

Pacific Drilling Ltd. or PDL started a joint venture with Waste Management Inc. to operate the Larpi landfill years back. That contract between DPW and PDL stopped, prompting DPW to seek a contractor for at least equipment rental. That was SARS.

Tangs Corp., meanwhile, bought much of PDL's equipment and hired some of PDL's skilled personnel and therefore has significant site experience at the Marpi landfill, the procurement director said.

He added that some of Tang's personnel have been involved in the construction and operation of the Marpi landfill since its inception in 2002.

"Tang's has both the operational knowledge and the knowledge to comply with the regulatory scheme," the procurement director said.

It added that SARS "had no experience in operating a landfill until it obtained the contract for the temporary equipment rental."

He also cited that delay in the procurement of the long-term Marpi landfill contract procurement is beneficial to SARS even without a solicitation cancellation because of the emergency procurement it won to supply temporary equipment.

Health, safety concerns

DPW's Sablan, in his May 28 letter to the procurement director, said the department is concerned that current waste placement and compaction at the Marpi landfill is not being done in a manner consistent with best management practices and the fill placement sequence contained in DPW's operating permit.

He said DPW's evaluation of SARS' existing waste placement and compaction activities indicates improper compaction is being obtained and that application of significantly more soil than required for daily cover is substantially impacting air space availability negatively.

"These actions have created damaging conditions that will impact both the health and safety of Saipan's residents and place the CNMI in a dangerous position with the U.S. EPA and DEQ. We do not believe that continuation of this arrangement beyond its expiration on May 31, 2013 is beneficial to DPW or the CNMI," DPW's Sablan said.

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LIBDAY

From Page 1

and Ellary Hideos. The student is being sponsored in the competition by Kevin's Mart and Department Store. A first-timer to the contest, Cabrera hopes her experience with the pageant will help her in the future.

Another candidate is 17-year-old Iskawa, the daughter of Rebecca Lisua and Benito Iskawa. The 11th grader is also a student of KHS and looks forward to bonding with her fellow candidates. Iskawa is excited to take part in this year's celebration where she expects to meet a lot of people.

For 17-year-old Johnson, joining the search is her way of giving back to the community. She is the daughter of Delia and the late Edwin Johnson and recently won the Miss *Pusong Pinoy* crown, a program organized by the United Filipino Organization, which is sponsoring her candidacy in the Liberation Day pageant. Johnson is a graduating student at Marianas High School.

Palacios, meantime, is the daughter of Teresa Palacios and McGarrett Palacios. This 16-years-old lass is a 10th grader at Saipan Southern High School and a first-timer to the competition. Like other candidates, she looks forward to a fun and worthwhile experience.

Completing the slate of contenders this year is Nicole Ichihara Sablan, a sophomore at Northern Marianas College. She is the daughter of Belinda and Sonny Sablan.

The winner of the search is determined through the candidates' ticket sales.

NMC

From Page 1

separation of responsibilities of the board and NMC management led by president Sharon Y. Hart, Ph.D.

"From my perspective, the matter is an administrative action and not a board action. Therefore, this should stay at the management level. We have separate responsibilities and we are a policymaking board," Lizama said.

According to him, Hart has authority to hire, fire, renew, or not renew personnel contracts. The college, he said, has existing policies that protects its personnel.

Lizama said it's only in urgent and special circumstances that the board can immediately intervene in the affairs of the management, such as if the action taken by the president is detrimental to the college and the community. Non-renewal of contracts, he said, doesn't fall into this category.

Lizama cited many past instances when the board was found in violation of accreditation standards for getting involved in management affairs. This improper practice, he said, is long gone.

Lee, a 13-year instructor at the college, was given his walking papers Tuesday morning. Podziewski, who's just been elected Faculty Senate president, was given his 30-day notice at his home later that same day. These two are the most vocal critics of Hart, whom they accused of mismanagement, abuse of power, and inaccurate accreditation reporting, among others. They and other faculty members described the non-renewal of their contracts as "clear retaliation."

Lizama declined to comment when asked if the board sees Hart's action as a form of "retaliation." He said the president has the "flexibility to run the college in a manner that is most appropriate."

He said no when asked if the board was informed ahead of the decision on the two employees. He also declined to comment when asked if this issue will have any impact on the college.

Both Lee and Podziewski told *Saipan Tribune* that they will challenge the president's decision because they believe that they have been excellent in their teaching jobs. Lee has been with the college for 13 years while Podziewski has been at NMC for two years.

When asked if the two can appeal the president's decision to the board, Lizama said no. He said that only "terminated" contracts can be appealed, not non-renewal cases.

BUCKINGHAM

From Page 1

specific to the Buckingham matter.

"The investigation has to do with how the CNMI law enforcement responds to fugitives who return to the Commonwealth," San Nicolas said in a chance interview on Capital Hill yesterday afternoon.

From Colorado and via Hawaii and Guam, Buckingham arrived at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Tuesday morning and was picked up by his counsel Brien Sers Nicolas.

No law enforcement agency served him with the outstanding arrest warrant at the airport.

Buckingham's voluntary return to the CNMI caught many by surprise. He is also a subject of an extradition request.

"I'm looking into that matter. I don't have a response right now. But just like you, I have some questions. And then we will be investigating," San Nicolas said yesterday, when asked why Buckingham was not arrested at the airport.

Law enforcement agencies with airport operations include the Commonwealth Ports Authority and the Division of Customs under the Department of Finance. Because of federalization of CNMI immigration, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection controls the borders.

Buckingham turned himself in at the Department of Public Safety Tuesday. Police officers later arrested him at DPS, brought him to the corrections complex, appeared before Judge David Wiseman and posted a $50,000 bail. Wiseman said that Buckingham's presence cures his fugitive status.

Rep. Tony Sablan (IR-Saipan), a former CNMI immigration director, said yesterday that just like many others in the community, one of the big questions is, "How can somebody who is pretty much on the run, declared a fugitive from justice, and a high-profile individual with arrest warrant issued against him, missed law enforcement agencies?"

"Somebody needs to take the time to look into this issue. A high-profile individual with an arrest warrant on him comes to the airport and was not intercepted," Sablan told *Saipan Tribune*.

Buckingham is charged with one count of use of public supplies, services, time and personnel for campaign activities; one count of use of the name of a government department or agency to campaign and/or express support for a candidate running for public office; six counts of misconduct in public office; one count of failure to produce documents or information; one count of obstructing justice: interference with service of process, one count of theft of services; and one count of conspiracy to commit theft of services.

These are related to his signing of a no-bid $190.8 million diesel power purchase agreement with Saipan Development LLC and a sole-source ARRA management contract, hosting of a gathering for former governor Benigno R. Fitial's delegate candidate in 2010, and failure to appear in court despite being served a penal summons in connection with criminal charges against him in August 2012, among other things.

Meanwhile, the attorney general, when asked whether the OAG will have a role in Buckingham's prosecution, said the OAG defers all questions to George Hasselback of the Office of the Public Auditor, who is prosecuting the case.

"Other than that, I have no comment. I will say that I understand that, I know that Mr. Buckingham is on island and he is going to be answering the charges against him and we'll just let the process take its course. But as to what our position is, I'd rather defer to Mr. Hasselback. He is the prosecutor in this case," the AG said.

San Nicolas clarified that he was not the one that appointed Hasselback as special prosecutor in the case. It was Judge David Wiseman.

Buckingham asks to be allowed to travel

Former attorney general Edward T. Buckingham has asked the Superior Court to allow him to travel back to Colorado.

Office of the Public Auditor legal counsel George Hasselback confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* last night that Buckingham's motion to modify his bail conditions will be heard at 1:30pm today, Thursday, before Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo.

Hasselback said he has to wait and see what Buckingham's counsel, Brien Sers Nicholas, proposes before he has an answer to what he is going to say in court.

"So I just leave until tomorrow and see what they say," said Hasselback, who is the special prosecutor in the case.

In the motion to modify, Nicholas cited the same reasons he mentioned during Tuesday's initial appearance/bail hearing for Buckingham.

Nicholas said that Buckingham is due to appear in a Colorado court on June 10 with respect to the extradition matter, and has a medical condition and needs to return to see his doctor.

On Tuesday, the former AG returned to Saipan and turned himself in at the Department of Public Safety where he was arrested. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

FUND

From Page 1

self among those who believe that there is still time to save the Fund.

McMahon, who is currently battling cancer at the Queen's Hospital in Honolulu, Hawaii, believes that resolving the mess at the pension fund requires serious leadership and compromise.

"There are so many implications in this total breakdown in the constitutional obligations of NMI government that this issue has become the new impossible riddle…at least if you listen to the newspapers and the words of politicians. I have never heard so many admit so quickly that they expect the Fund to go belly up in March 2014," he said.

He believes that nothing is impossible in order to save the Fund and the retirees if everyone concerned makes a commitment to do so. He pointed out that the impeachment and resignation of former governor Benigno R. Fitial, as well as the major changes in the Legislature this year, were supposedly unimaginable scenarios.

"This is just the beginning of a very big job that entails cleaning up the mess that was left behind! I am not alone in realizing that Saipan has come of age politically, that can and did take control of the Legislature and those bold new people and those from before did what was necessary to begin to take back NMI for the people," he said.

McMahon cautioned the islands' new leaders that, without any action to help the Fund survive, the islands will suffer a terrible disaster.

"I personally hate to dwell on what a wretched being I would become if I lose 90 percent of my income. There is no way to lose 90 percent of my costs for living. More and more I suspect I have to. I see old friends dwelling on this pathetic thing that never should be allowed to happen in any way," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

McMahon blames the current mess on the CNMI government—not the Fund and absolutely not its members.

"The blatant truth is that the Fund did not up and fail by any doings of the retirees to whom that money belongs [to]. The problem was entirely caused by the failure of the NMI government. Total failure of the Legislature under questionable leadership to perform its duty," he said.

Like most retirees, McMahon feels that he had been and is being robbed of his money "and what the thieves are offering now is just a bed of nails" as relief.

"Why the retirees? Why are they refusing to pay the pensions due legally and constitutionally to the retirees? If the hospital was robbed by the government they would not close the hospital for that reason. They would have to find the money to operate the hospital. If PSS had been robbed by the government they would not close the schools and send all teachers home with no pay. Why, when it is the Retirement Fund, would anybody expect the retirees to take full financial responsibility?" he asked.

McMahon believes that there are ways to pay the retirees "and still maintain the grass in the parks." He said it will take an unselfish person who considers other people in his or her thinking and plans to take leadership in this concern, and a Legislature willing to do the dirty work of fixing up the things that were broken and abused by the previous government.

Try the rider bill

Angie Sills, who now resides in Arizona, has an idea to help resolve the Fund's depletion.

"Letters and emails and lawsuits accomplish nothing. Pozzolan, casinos, and POB [pension obligation bonds] are frivolous and pie in the sky non-solutions. How about every single spending bill that passes in the CNMI Legislature has a 'rider' attached that would allocate an equal amount of money to go to the Retirement Fund?" she said.

Gov. Eloy S. Inos, she said, should not sign any bill without this provision. All spending, she said, should be matched by an equal dollar that will go to the Fund.

For instance, she said, the CNMI has money for pork barrel projects where the money goes to the pockets of contractors but the projects do not actually improve the lives of citizens.

For Sills, money to build a separate veterans cemetery is a luxury, not a necessity. Repairing Tinian government buildings are also luxuries, and not necessities when the *man'amko* are about to go broke.

Effective lobbying of the rider bills for the Fund is needed to make it happen, Sills said.

"If he [Gov. Eloy Inos] won't do this, he's no better than Fitial," she added.

The multiplier effect

Noel M. Soria, a former comptroller of the Fund, said the collapse of the pension program will have a multiplier effect that would be so devastating to the CNMI economy that he calls March 2014 the "Armageddon" of the islands.

"The purchasing power of $70 million annually and its economic impact if it stops come March 2014 is an Armageddon. If say the multiplier effect of one dollar is equals to three, that's $210 million loss in economic base and this will be a shock to the economy of the CNMI, given that a large percentage of retirees are residents," said Soria.

He said the sudden jolt to economic activities will be felt primarily in the food industries, utilities, even the taxes withheld from pension to the tune of $900,000 bi-monthly.

Soria said the nearly $22 million in government revenue from retirees alone and its multiplier effect will batter the CNMI's economic balance. Banks that finance the car loans of retirees will probably see massive defaults. Gasoline consumption will drop and all car dealers will feel the distress once the pension checks stop coming.

"It's a nightmare. Most of the retirees will experience massive poverty at an advanced age, sick, and could not afford to sustain daily living expenses. I could not imagine the devastating effect to the many families that rely on pension if the Fund will dry up and die. In every angle I look, the Fund's collapse come March 2014 will cause devastating trauma to the CNMI economy," he added.

Mayor backs move to abolish Saipan Municipal Council

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Mayor Donald G. Flores wants the island's municipal council abolished, saying this will help conserve resources and streamline the government.

Flores said that since its inception on Saipan, nothing much on record has been spoken about the Saipan Municipal Council's effectiveness. The council was established in 1987.

"Streamlining the government by abolishing the municipal councils certainly holds water. Interesting to know about the municipal council is that we found almost nothing on the books that, other than in Article 6 of our NMI Constitution, defines its authority, powers, duties and responsibilities, programs, etc. This has been and still so for the past 26 years for the municipal council of Saipan and the islands north of Saipan," said Flores.

The Saipan mayor has submitted to the Legislature a written position supporting House Legislative Initiative 18-02, which calls for the abolition of municipal councils on all three islands.

According to Flores, to continue appropriating budgets every fiscal year to an agency "that administers almost nothing" is not sound policymaking.

He said the council has been a little less involved in developing safer, healthier, and cleaner villages. Because he understands the budgetary issues, Flores said his office does not expect the council to perform fieldwork but he expects it to develop policies that, at the end of the day, protect the safety, health, and welfare of the public.

Saipan Tribune learned that this fiscal year, the Saipan Municipal Council was provided a budget of $116,672. It has three staff whose tasks include providing administrative support for three council members.

"All too common in the past has been criticism of the municipal council for performing only a single task of giving out resolutions, which does not count as policymaking. Our villages, once clean and safe, have fallen into a state of rundown, ignored by the very agency expected to keep it from shambles. The municipal council could have done better by supporting the Office of the Mayor of Saipan in attacking local problems," said Flores.

The mayor pointed out that since the beginning of the fiscal year up to now, he had not heard the council speak about its programs, projects, or plans for improving the lives of residents on Saipan.

Other than the Neighborhood Watch task force program, which was begun by the previous council members, Flores said it appears that the council is acting on its own, without committing to consultation with the Office of the Mayor.

Although he credits the council for the creation of the Kiosku in Chalan Kanoa, he said there is an apparent attempt by the council to unload itself of the responsibility of maintaining the Kiosku and wants to pass it to the mayor's office, which rejected it outright.

"To maximize our very limited resources, we need to plan development, like the Kiosku, so that hundreds of thousands of dollars that was spent on developing a structure like it are not subject to risk of being wasted," he said, adding that taxpayers should not be burdened any more than they are now to pay for the maintenance of another structure like the Kiosku.

"The Kiosku has been built. The question that should have been asked before groundbreaking was, when was the right time to build it?" asked the mayor.

This is not the first time the abolition of the municipal councils has been brought to the Legislature's table. However, attempts in the past all failed.

NMC appoints two new directors

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College recently appointed Charlotte Cepeda to be the new director of the School of Education and Manny Castro to be the new director of Admissions and Records/Registrar.

As director, Cepeda will be leading the management and instructional operations of the School of Education, including working with faculty and staff on program and curriculum development and evaluation, establishing priorities and developing multi-year instructional plans, ensuring continuous improvement of instructional programs and services through regular program review and assessment activities, working with partner agencies to assess workforce needs, enhance job placement rates for graduating students, and develop internship and classroom training opportunities.

Cepeda

Castro

Cepeda is no stranger to the college. Prior to becoming its director, Cepeda was an instructor at the NMC School of Education. Before joining NMC as a full-time instructor, she taught at Oleai Elementary School, a summer program at Saipan Southern High School, and courses at NMC as an adjunct instructor.

Cepeda received the "Instructional Faculty Member of the Year" award in 2012. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from NMC in November 2006 and went on to earn her master's degree in International Education from Framingham State University in December 2008.

"Teaching and working with other educators is my life's passion. I am excited to take on this new opportunity and to continue to build on the success that has already been accomplished by the hard working team at the NMC School of Education," she told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

As the new director of admissions and records/registrar, Castro will be responsible for the management of all student admission activities, the management of all student records, and student recruitment.

Prior to his new post, Castro worked as a financial aid counselor at NMC. In this capacity he helped students obtain federal, CNMI, and private scholarships and grants. He also worked as an outreach counselor with the College Access Challenge Grant Program, where he promoted programs that advanced the grant's mission of helping underrepresented groups of students enroll and succeed in college. Castro also worked as enrollment manager for the Office of Admissions and Records, where he led the college's enrollment activities.

Castro earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from the Eastern Oregon University.

"I have seen firsthand how the college's efforts have impacted the lives of so many. I believe in its mission and will continue to help giving back to the community in this new position," said Castro.

Bordallo secures visa waiver language in budget bill

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU) issued the following statement on the House Committee on Appropriations approving its version of the fiscal year 2014 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill. The bill provides $38.9 billion in discretionary funding for the Department of Homeland Security. The bill will likely be considered by the full House of Representatives in the coming weeks.

Bordallo requested that report language be included in the bill to address concerns about progress on expanding the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program. Specifically, the language instructs the Department of Homeland Security to finalize deliberations on the expansion of the program on Guam. The Committee urges DoD to include appropriate security protocols as necessary. The report language builds off the progress initiated by Bordallo in 2008 with passage of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act to establish a regional visa waiver program that would expand tourism in the Marianas region.

"It is important for the Department of Homeland Security to finalize their deliberations on expanding the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program and comply with original Congressional intent of expanding tourism to the islands," said Bordallo. "I appreciate the help and support of Subcommittee Chairman John Carter and Ranking Member David Price of North Carolina for including this report language to hold DHS accountable. The expansion of our tourism industry is critical to the long-term economic growth of our island. We have made a lot of progress on this issue and I appreciate efforts to address security concerns raised by some federal agencies. However, the solutions to their concerns have been discussed by the stakeholders and are achievable. I believe this report language will help to refocus DHS's decision-making and continue the discussion on how we solve the identified problems. It is important that we end the disparate set of rules regarding the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program and meet Congressional intent by establishing a common set of regulations for all visitors to the region." ***(PR)***

Chamber luncheon meeting on June 5

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will hold its June monthly general membership luncheon meeting on June 5, 2013, at the Saipan World Resort. Luncheon will begin at 11:30am and the meeting agenda will begin at 12pm sharp. Luncheon is $20 for SCC members and $30 for guests and the general public.

The Chamber will present its annual college scholarship awards of $2,000 each to six students furthering their college educations. Families and school officials will be attending the luncheon to witness the students being presented with their awards, as well as acknowledging the Chamber's commitment to the education of our future businesspersons and leaders.

University of Guam's Kristina Torres, program coordinator for Graduate Studies, will also speak to the SCC membership about UOG's Masters Programs for CNMI residents.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce, founded in 1959 and incorporated in 1976, is the largest private business organization in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Chamber works to promote and protect business, economic and economic interests, and the general welfare of our islands. ***(SCC)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB13-CRM-120 (R)

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: JUNE 10, 2013 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"OFFICE SPACE RENTAL FOR THE COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT – ROTA BRANCH"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE BIDDER MUST COMPLY WITH CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A)-(D).

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RITA C. CHONG-DELA CRUZ
ADMINISTRATOR OF CRM

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, the Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) hereby gives notice that a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Friday, May 31, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. in the CPA Conference Room, Second Floor, Captain George F. Fleming Building at the Port of Saipan.

The following items are on the agenda for the above-referenced meeting:

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes (May 14, 2013)

II. SPECIAL AGENDA ITEM(S)
1. Personnel Matters

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

V. ADJOURNMENT

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items.

/s/ JOSE R. LIFOIFOI
Chairman, Board of Directors

May 29, 2013

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB13-DOC-116

SUBMISSION DATE: JUNE 10, 2013 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF DUTY UNIFORMS FOR THE CNMI DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS OFFICERS"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DRIVE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ RAMON C. MAFNAS
COMMISSIONER,
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB13-DPL-107

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: JUNE 25, 2013 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"RIGHT OF WAY AND EXCAVATION OF THE PONDING BASIN FOR THE WEST SAN JOSE VILLAGE HOMESTEAD SUBDIVISION, TINIAN A PROJECT UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A MANDATORY PRE BID CONFERENCE FOR THIS PROJECT IS SCHEDULED AT 10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME, ON JUNE 11, 2013 AT THE DPL CONFERENCE ROOM, SAIPAN.

ALL INQUIRIES SHALL BE IN WRITING AND ADDRESSED TO PATRICIA RASA, DIRECTOR , PLANNING DIVISION, DPL, P.O. BOX 500380, SAIPAN, MP 96950 OR FAXED TO (670) 234-3755 AND MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, JUNE 14, 2013. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SHALL BE SHARED WITH OTHER BIDDERS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BE COME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ PEDRO A. TENORIO
ACTING SECRETARY OF DPL

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Public library to celebrate 20th anniversary on Saturday

By REINA S. PEREZ
STUDENT REPORTER

The Joeten Kiyu Public Library invites the public to its 20th anniversary celebration this Saturday, June 1, from 9am to 3pm.

In a press briefing held yesterday, members of the library's board, officials and staff spoke about the preparations for the Saturday celebration.

According to board secretary Francisco Villagomez, the line-up of activities include a bouncy house, a giveaway for children, popcorn, cotton candy, shaved ice, local cultural demonstrators, local cultural performers, local authors for book signing and selling of their books, a big truck display, and educational information exhibits.

The Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Band will be performing as well as the Chalan Kanoa San Isidro Youth Center, Ataktak Dance Group, Marianas High School Poksai Chamorro Club, and many other groups and individuals.

The ribbon cutting ceremony for the library's new roof and Family Literacy Fair will also take place on Saturday.

The keynote speaker for the event will be Anthony Pellegrino, the founding president of Library Friends. Education tax credit donors, founders, and partners will also be presented with appreciation plaques.

The library's official 20th anniversary was actually in December but was pushed back due to the ongoing roof repairs at the Susupe building.

"Although it was long overdue, but better late than never," Villagomez said.

Villagomez thanked the Anniversary Planning Committee composed of Viola DeLeon Guerrero, Erlinda Naputi, Vicky Cabrera, Celina Foreman, and Roy Rechebei. Villagomez is the program planner of Saturday's events.

The roof replacement is a part of a five-year state technology plan for the library. Saturday's celebration marks the completion of this $200,000 project. Up next is the air-condition retrofitting.

The library now has a faster Internet connection and will be launching ebooks subscription by October this fiscal year. Joeten Kiyu Public Library plans to have a new website up before the ebooks launch.

Due to Saturday's activities, the library will be closed on that day. It will resume normal library hours the following week, Tuesday to Friday, from 10am to 6pm and Saturday 9am to 4pm. For questions, contact Joeten Kiyu Public Library at 235-READ (7323).

REINA S. PEREZ

Joeten Kiyu Public Library board members and officials have their picture taken after yesterday's news briefing at the library. They are, from left, vice chair Crystal Cabrera, treasurer Soledad Tenoria, JKPL executive director John Gonzales, secretary Francisco Villagomez, chair of the Planning Committee Viola DeLeon Guerrero, chair Mark Rabauliman, and board member Lucy Shilling.

Fun events for kids this summer

Joeten Kiyu Public Library looks forward to a summer of fun events for children.

The 2013 Summer Reading and Cultural Program "Dig into Reading" registration begins June 18 and is open to children between the ages of 6 and 12. Registration ends June 20.

Events that will take place during the summer are the Independent Reading Challenge, Tuesday's Read Aloud and Crafts, Wednesday's Movie Day, Thursday's Special Guest Day, Friday's Field Trip Day, and Saturdays Cultural Activity. The Independent Reading Challenge takes place from June 25 to Aug. 2.

These events are designed to keep children engaged in educational activities that they can enjoy with their family while classes are out. ***(Reina S. Perez)***

GOOD JOB! CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Congratulations to all Sister Remedio kindergarten students on your graduation day on May 29, 2013. Greetings coming out from Chelsy Luna Reyes.

Thespian group to stage 'Property Rites'

Imagine that you are in an art gallery, looking at a sculpture with many figures. What if the figures started coming to life? What if they began to have feelings? What if you are the gallery owner and spent millions of dollars for the sculpture and hoped to sell it at a profit? This is the high concept premise of the modern drama *Property Rites* by Alan Haehnel, set in the future or an alternate reality.

Thespians of the Western Pacific Islands presents the play *Property Rites* by Alan Haehnel on June 11, 2013, at the MHS Dolphin Theatre (T Building). The shows will be staged at 7pm.

The script of *Property Rites* introduces us to 15 figures in a robotic sculpture, owned by Kyle McManus. He attempts to sell the art installation to the Pushtins (Rudy, Gladys and Mike), but there are problems brewing. Technicians Brent and Leeza offer a drastic solution, but the mostly female figures, controlled by their male owner, have a different outcome in mind.

Thespian students from Marianas High School, Saipan Southern High School, Hopwood Junior High School, Grace Christian Academy and the SAEF school will stage this play on Saipan and then will take it to the International Thespian Festival at Lincoln, Nebraska in June.

The cast and crew, who were the overall winners in the CNMI thespian competitions, are Mikhail Alcantara, Harold Aranda, Grace Barro, Darren Cajipo, Lady Dominique Canape, Simei Charfaurous, Anne Cruz, Jorem Guardian, Diane Hermogenes, Noel Jimenez, Soon Kwon, Rosemarie Liangco, Annabel Manzo, Robert Marmito, Cyril Salcedo, Rolando Sangalang, Ericka Serrano, Vivian Viernes, Andrew Villanueva, and Kyle Villegas.

Tickets will cost $5 for adults and $3 for students. For more information, contact Harold Easton at Marianas High School, or call 285-1657. ***(PR)***

Conservation program applications due by June 14

WASHINGTON—The Natural Resources Conservation Service's Conservation Stewardship Program will provide about $175 million in funding for up to 12.6 million additional acres enrollment this year.

Although applications are accepted all year, farmers, ranchers and forestland owners interested in CSP should submit applications by June 14 to their local NRCS office to ensure they are considered for this year's funding. The deadline was extended from May 31.

The voluntary program allows producers to go the extra mile in conserving natural resources while also maintaining or increasing the productivity of their operations.

"CSP is different than our other financial assistance programs," said NRCS acting chief Jason Weller. "It offers payments to producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and agree to adopt higher levels of stewardship. It's about conservation activities on the entire operation, focusing on multiple resource concerns."

Playing a significant part in conserving and improving our nation's resources, producers enrolled an additional 12.1 million acres in CSP last year, bringing the total number of acres to more than 50 million.

Many of the CSP enhancements improve soil quality, which helps land become more resilient to extreme weather.

Several other improvements are available for producers, including intensive rotational grazing, intercropping and wildlife friendly fencing.

Because of the extreme weather in 2012, more interest and participation in the cover crop enhancements is expected this year, according to NRCS experts.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if the program is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, stewardship threshold requirements and payment types.

For the checklist and additional information, visit the CSP website http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/ or visit your local USDA NRCS office. ***(NRCS)***

Chamber: Yes to 99-year lease, no to tax rebate cuts

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce supports House Legislative Initiative 18-5 that places before voters the question whether or not to increase the maximum term of public land leases in the CNMI from the current 40 years to 99 years.

At the same time, the Chamber opposes House Bill 18-69, which reduces tax rebates, pointing out that it is a tax increase in disguise.

In two separate letters, Chamber president Alex Sablan said the business group agrees with HLI 18-5's findings that by extending the maximum leasehold period to 99 years, the economic advantage to those acquiring CNMI government land for commercial purposes and future development would be enhanced.

"The SCC also believes existing leasehold interests, if allowed to extend to 99-year lease period stated in HLI 18-5 through negotiating with the CNMI government, would essentially have their current investments stabilized, and the uncertainty many current large hotel developments are experiencing would diminish somewhat," Sablan told House Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero (IR-Saipan).

HLI 18-5, authored by the House speaker, will be placed on the ballot for voters' ratification in the 2014 general election if it passes the House and the Senate.

At present, the term of public land leases is 25 years, with an additional 15 years subject to the Legislature's approval.

The Chamber added that the longer the leasehold period, the sounder the investment lending as a rule.

This, in turn, creates more secure development, protects and increases employments and offers the CNMI government better long-range budgeting.

"The Saipan Chamber of Commerce supports HLI 18-5 addressing public land leases, and believes it would represent a solid attempt by the CNMI government to re-invent our islands' economy and get us back on the road to economic prosperity," Sablan added.

The Chamber, the largest business organization in the CNMI, meanwhile, said it is "adamantly opposed" to Deleon Guerrero's HB 18-69.

The bill reduces rebates from the Northern Marianas Territorial Incomes Tax from 90 percent to 70 percent at the highest level of rebate, with proportional reduction in the rebate at the lower levels.

"Although this amendment to the Code is styled as a reduction of the rebate, it is nothing more than a tax increase. Any reduction of the NMTIT rebate will harm individuals and families, businesses, and the economy, and ultimately the Commonwealth government itself," Sablan said.

The Chamber president added that the term tax rebate "reductions" will increase income tax rates and withholding tax rates for companies and individuals in the CNMI.

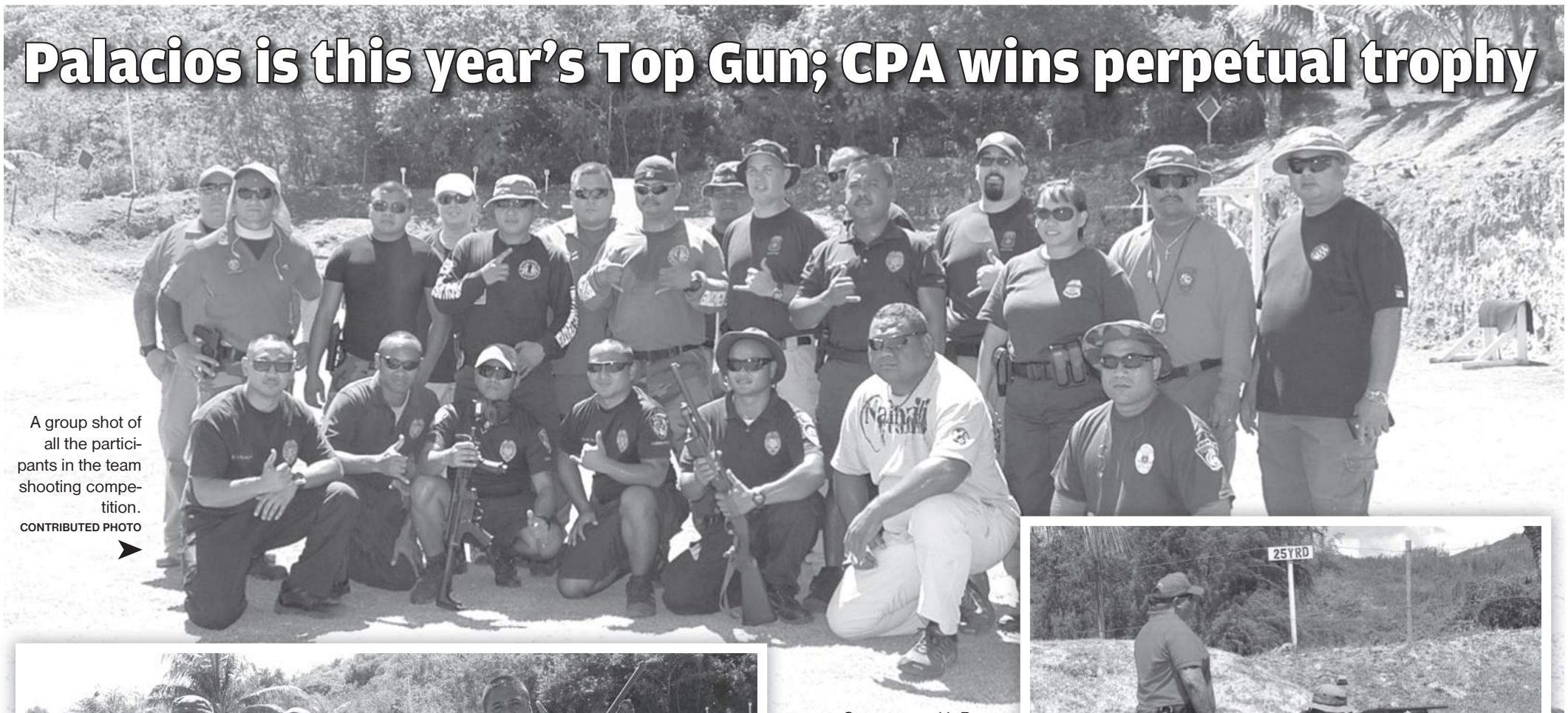
He said Guam will become more attractive to investors from a tax standpoint.

"Much greater enforcement of existing tax laws and regulations will surely gain any comparable revenue without the corresponding loss of investment that would come by a loss of attractiveness for investors," he added.

Deleon Guerrero's proposed rebate cut, however, will only be for two years. It takes effect on Jan. 1, 2014, and expires on Dec. 31, 2015.

Deleon Guerrero said revenues from the Chapter 7 tax will be appropriated to the NMI Retirement Fund only.

Palacios is this year's Top Gun; CPA wins perpetual trophy



A group shot of all the participants in the team shooting competition.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The 2013 Top Gun Team (Defending) Champions: CPA Ports Police, from left to right, Capt. Joe Palacios, Jason Cruz, Manuel DeGracia, and Floyd Mendiola.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Commonwealth Ports Police Capt. Joe Palacios, the winner of the 2013 Top Gun individual competition, shoots a shotgun during the competition with a safety officer looking on.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The winning team of CPA is surrounded by firearms instructors.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Capt. Joe Palacios of the Commonwealth Ports Authority is this year's Top Gun champion while the CPA team was crowned with a perpetual trophy for its three successive victories in the team category.

Palacios bested 16 other participants from different local and federal law enforcement agencies during the annual Department of Public Safety's Top Gun competition held Saturday at the DPS shooting range in San Juan.

Palacios hit 23 of the 24 targets and registered the fastest time, according to firearms instructor Jason Tarkong.

Under the individual category, Tarkong said, participants used four different guns, including their issued handguns.

In the four-member team competition, the defending champion CPA defeated four other teams to grab the perpetual trophy.

The champion team was composed of Capt. Palacios, Jason Cruz, Manuel DeGracia, and Floyd Mendiola.

The DPS team grabbed second place.

The three other teams were two from CPA and one Immigration and Custom Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations.

In the team competition, team members fired four different guns using different targets.

It is CPA's seventh year in a row to win the champion title since the Top Gun competition was launched in 2006. There was no competition in 2011.

Last year, CPA's Capt. Juan Rebuenog won the Top Gun champion in the individual category. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

4H Program to host activities for youth

As part of the upcoming 30th Agricultural Fair activities, the 4H Program of the Northern Marianas College – Cooperative Research, Education, and Extension Service will be hosting activities that promote youth participation in the fair.

These include a junior cooking competition, an agro-fashion show, and a piglet race. The deadline to submit a registration form for any of the activities is Wednesday, June 5, 2013.

For the junior cooking competition, the main ingredient is the eggplant, which will be provided by the fair organizers. Judges will base their decision about who has the best dish on presentation, taste and the use of the eggplant. Participants must be between the ages of 12 and 15.

For the agro-fashion show, participants must use natural materials only and will be judged on creativity, use of materials, and interview questions. Participants must also be between the ages of 8 and 12.

Lastly, for the piglet race, participants must bring their own piglets, which should be between 10 to 12 inches. Participants who plan to join with their piglets must be between the ages of 5 and 17.

Registration forms can be picked up from the NMC-CREES Office in Building F. Space is limited, so eligible youth are strongly encouraged to register as soon as possible.

For more information, contact Polly Omechelang at 234-5498 Ext. 1712 or Bonnie Royal at Ext. 1705. Omechelang can also be emailed at the following email address: pollyo@nmcnet.edu. ***(NMC)***

DEFENSE TALKS
SANTA RITA, Guam—Capt. Mike Ward, Naval Base Guam commanding officer, speaks with Itsunori Onodera, Japan Minister of Defense, about military construction projects at Victor Wharf May 29. Onodera also visited Andersen Air Force Base and met with military leadership while on Guam.
U.S. NAVY/LT. WILLIAM KNIGHT

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Raffle drawing postponed

The Sexual Assault Awareness Month raffle drawing set for tonight, May 30, has been postponed to Thursday, July 18, at 7pm and will be held at the Garapan Street Market. The raffle is an annual fundraiser for the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence and all funds raised will go to the Coalition. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and thank you for your understanding and support. For more information, call 234-3878. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '93 reunion meeting

The Marianas High School Class of 1993 will be having a final class reunion meeting on Friday, May 31, 2013, starting at 6pm at the Oleai Beach Bar & Grill, Beach Road, San Jose. We encourage all classmates to come and attend this very important meeting. If you have any questions, contact Maryann Borja-Arriola at 483-2279 or Vivian Sablan at 288-1129. ***(PR)***

Military training at Warning Area 517

The U.S. military will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on May 30 from 8am to 4pm. The public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated.

W-517 is activated north of latitude 12° 00' 00". All vessels are advised to remain clear. W-517 south of latitude 12° 00' 00" is open for normal use/transit. W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon comprising of 14,000 nautical square miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. ***(PR)***

Navy, Air Force training on FDM

The U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on May 30, from 11:30am to 1pm. The general public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated. The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla training area will be on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants. ***(PR)***

DEQ sets sights on Obyan Beach cleanup

The Division of Environmental Quality's Cleanup Brigade will be picking up trash at Obyan Beach this Saturday, June 1, 2013, at 8am.

If you would like to volunteer, meet the DEQ representatives on Saturday at the Obyan Beach parking lot at 8am. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a brigade t-shirt.

Last month's Coral Ocean Point Beach cleanup had 26 volunteers from GTC and WSR elementary schools, Hopwood Jr. High, Saipan Southern High, staff from Coral Ocean Point, and other. About 440 lbs of trash was removed from the beach and disposed of.

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500/1. ***(DEQ)***

MHS Class of 1983 activities

The MHS Class of 1983's 30th year class reunion raffle drawing will be held on Friday, May 31, 2013, 7:30pm at the Minatchom Atdao Pavilion in Susupe, Civic Center.

The MHS Class of 1983 will also have a general meeting on Friday, May 31, 2013, at 7pm. Anyone interested in buying reunion banquet tickets for the upcoming class reunion on June 22, 2013, can call Tonnei Camacho at 483-9665. ***(PR)***

May 31 deadline to file statement of financial interest

The Office of the Public Auditor is reminding all Commonwealth public officials and employees who are required to file a statement of financial interest for calendar year 2012 under the Government Ethics Code Act of 1992 that the deadline for filing a verified statement of financial interests is May 31, 2013. Any person failing to comply with the financial disclosure requirements is subject to penalties, including a $10 per day penalty for periods of delinquency.

For more information, contact OPA at 322-6481/2, fax number 322-7812, or e-mail mail@opacnmi.com. You may also visit OPA's website at www.opacnmi.com for information about filing requirements. ***(OPA)***

FOA to stage 'Miss Saigon'

Miss Saigon comes to Saipan this month, courtesy of the Friends of the Arts. This newest staging of the acclaimed musical will take place on May 30 and 31 for the evening shows. June 1 and 2 have both matinee and evening shows. Show time for matinee begins at 3pm and evening shows begin at 7pm. The venue is the MHS Dolphin Theater. The cost is $15 for adult non-members, $12 for adult FOA members, $8 for students, and $5 for Thespian members.

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

MAY 30, 2004

Ban eyed on some tobacco brands
Gov. Juan N. Babauta disclosed Friday that the CNMI would soon be barring tobacco manufactures that did not participate in the master settlement agreement from exporting their cigarette products in the Commonwealth. "These brands would be made public in the future and Customs would not allow them to come into the CNMI. They would be considered contrabands and would be confiscated," said the governor. In a signing ceremony Friday, Babauta said several tobacco manufacturers have deliberately not chosen to participate in the ongoing settlement but efforts are now being made to make them responsible.

'Only $5M in rebates remain unpaid'
The administration continues to process 2002 tax rebate and refund checks, and is expecting to meet its projected goal of completely issuing all checks by next month. This according to press secretary Peter A. Callaghan, who said last Friday the disbursement of checks has totaled about $15 million. "There are some $20 million that needed to be paid out, and of the amount, we have already issued $15 million, leaving just slightly over $5 million remaining," he said. Callaghan said the issuance of checks occurs almost every other week, depending on the financial obligation of the government.

May 30, 2005

Lawmakers divided on poker bill
House members failed again to reach a consensus on a bill that aims to keep poker establishments away from schools, nurseries, and churches. During a session on Friday, Rep. David Apatang opposed the 250-foot proposed distance as contained in House Bill 14-267, saying that it would hurt a number of poker businesses. H.B. 14-267, authored by Rep. Clyde Norita, provides that no amusement machine shall be operated within 250 feet from the closest boundary of any public or private school, childcare center, nurseries, and churches. It also prohibits operations of these machines adjacent to or within the same facility or complex and under the same roof where commercial laundromats or grocery stores are located.

Anatahan activity on the rise again
Volcanic activity on Anatahan appeared to be escalating, as volcanic ash emissions continued at an increasing rate, which already affected navigational visibility as far west as the Philippines. Yesterday's satellite images of the ash plume showed that it has become denser than Saturday's plume, based on monitoring activities by the Air Force Weather Agency. Yesterday's plume rose to altitudes of 15,000- to 18,000 feet, which extended about 400 nautical miles of Anatahan. But a thin plume of ash and volcanic smog also extended about 1,100 nautical miles from west-southwest to northwest of the volcano's summit, affecting navigational visibility at the Philippine Sea.

May 30, 2006

It's a no to tapping MPLT funds
The Fitial administration has dismissed a suggestion to tap funds held by the Marianas Public Land Trust, rather than sticking with the NMI Retirement Fund option, to inject capital to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. While the $40-million CUC loan proposal represents only 10 percent of the Retirement Fund's portfolio assets, the relief amount covers almost 90 percent of MPLT funds, press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. noted. "The government lacks financial resources and the only available funding source for CUC capital infusion is the NMIRF," Reyes said. "MPLT may lack requisite funds and is constitutionally restricted to remitting only interest earnings to general fund for legislative appropriation. [The former Marianas Public Lands Authority] also did not remit much, if anything, to MPLT for 10 years," he added.

'No LPG price hike for now'
Plans are underway for an increase in the prices of cooking gas, but it may not be implemented in the immediate future, according to a local retailer of liquefied petroleum gas. According to DL Corporation manager Joe Digno, its supplier has sent notice of a possible LPG price hike. But it has not been determined when it will become effective. DL Corporation serves as local retailer for Wushin Corp. The company's last price increase occurred in late February 2006 and brought the cost of LPG up by 10 percent. DL Corp. now sells a 90-pound cylinder at $92. The 50-lb cylinder is sold at $54, while the 20-lb cylinder is at $24. A gallon of cooking gas costs about $4. The company also adds a $3 fee for delivery.

Island Snapshots

WINNING TEAM

The team of Emmanuel Pancha and Richard Meimban take the top prize once again for Marianas Resort and Spa at the Chef's Competition held on the last day of the 15th annual Taste of Marianas on May 26, 2013.

REINA S. PEREZ

Hyatt Regency's chefs' creation, the "Five Alarm" Spicy Burger, won them second place at the Chef's Competition held on the last day of the 15th annual Taste of Marianas. REINA S. PEREZ

The Texas Chili Burger, a creation of two chefs from Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan, took third place at the Chef's Competition held on the last day of the 15th annual Taste of Marianas. REINA S. PEREZ

MULTI-MISSION FIRE BOAT

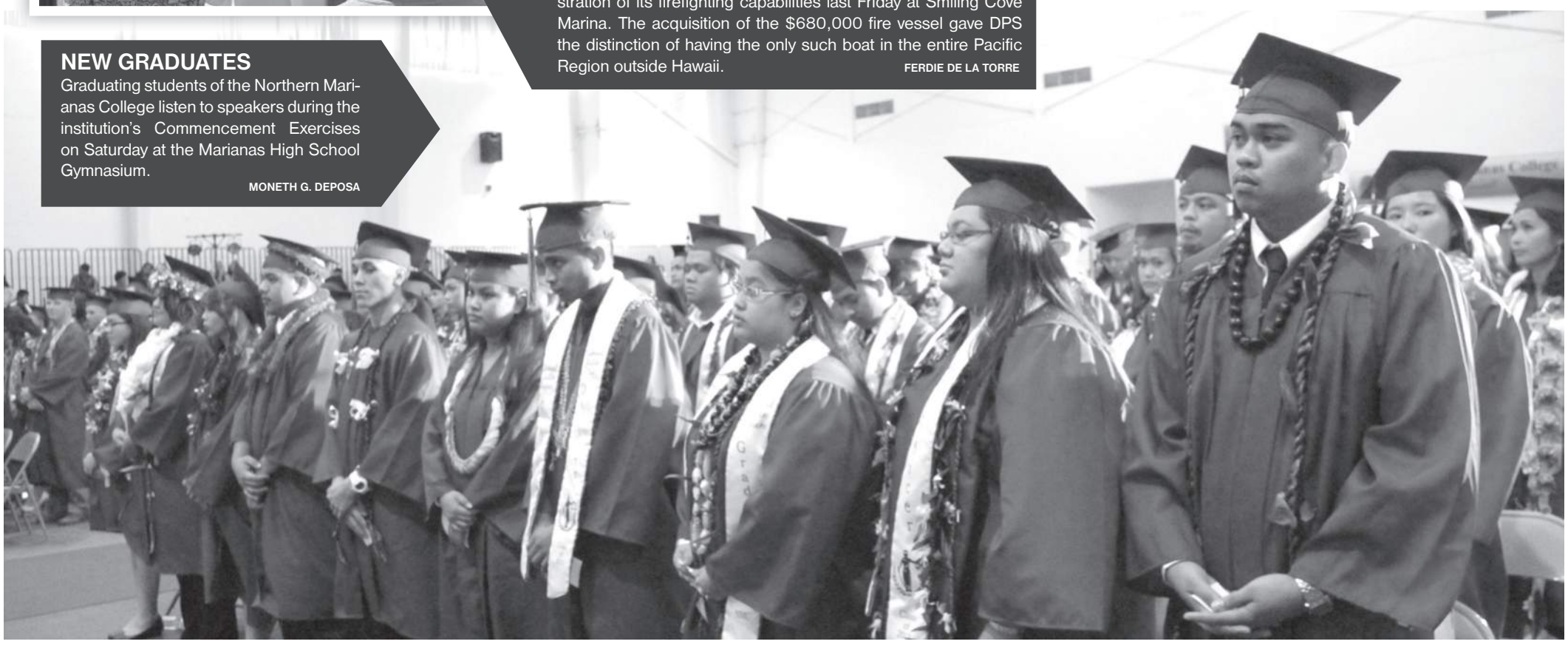
Gov. Eloy S. Inos gets light refreshment as Fr. Jesse Reyes, second from left, and other Department of Public Safety personnel and community members watch the newly purchased multi-mission fire boat spraying water in the air during the vessel's demonstration of its firefighting capabilities last Friday at Smiling Cove Marina. The acquisition of the $680,000 fire vessel gave DPS the distinction of having the only such boat in the entire Pacific Region outside Hawaii.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

NEW GRADUATES

Graduating students of the Northern Marianas College listen to speakers during the institution's Commencement Exercises on Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

MONETH G. DEPOSA



GARAPAN CLEANUP

Awaodori team leader Elisa Lazaro picks up cigarette butts along Beach Road during PDM Promoters Inc.'s monthly cleanup drive.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kinpachi staff along the island of Beach Road.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Inocencia Opokurong, mother of Saipan Awaodori member and an active participant in PDM Promoters' clean-ups, is seen here sweeping trash at Paseo de Marianas. Behind her is Nyla Sablan, also one of Saipan Awaodori's team leader. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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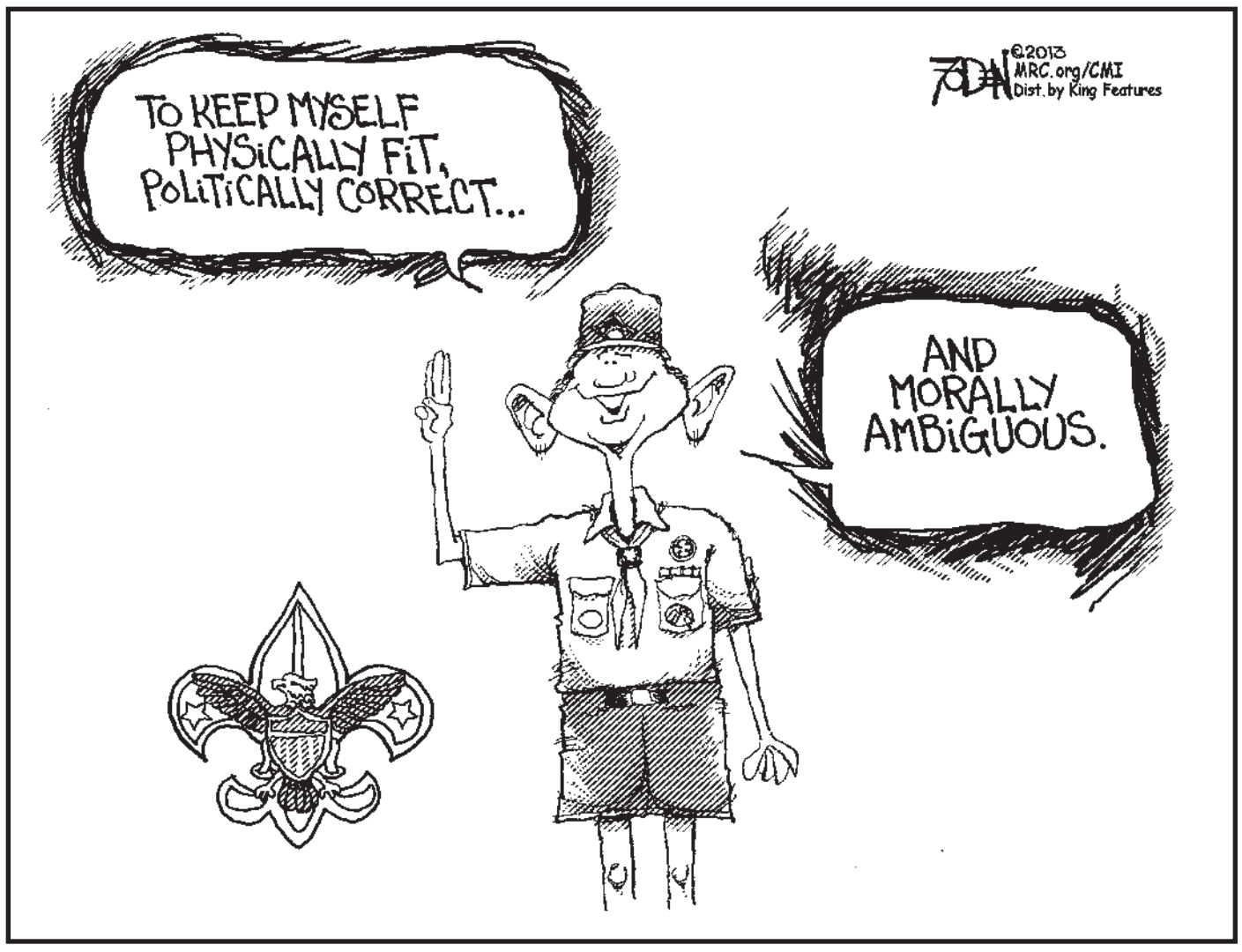

EDITORIAL

On genetically engineered food, let the market decide

The following editorial appeared in the Los Angeles Times *on Friday, May 24:*

The movement to force the labeling of genetically engineered food is gaining momentum. In November 2012, an initiative to require the labels in California was on the ballot; it was defeated. Now, federal legislation carried by Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., would mandate labeling most bioengineered food nationwide.

Yet the movement's argument is weakened by the lack of evidence that inserting fragments of DNA into crops harms our health. Pro-labeling activists—who also tend to be anti-Monsanto activists—point to polls finding that most Americans want the information labeled. But there is plenty about our food that consumers might like to know that is not on the labels. Food packages don't have to include information about the use of pesticides or hormones. There is evidence that the widespread use of antibiotics in livestock, not to treat illness but to fatten animals and prevent disease from sweeping through crowded pens, is contributing to the rise of drug-resistant infections that threaten human health. Yet antibiotic use also remains unlabeled, and most consumers are unaware of the practice.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration does require the labeling of artificial ingredients, and many people consider bioengineered food artificial. Corn that can survive certain pesticides certainly didn't evolve naturally. But neither did the tomato, developed decades ago, that ripens into a bright, uniform red. The attractive color was a product of selective breeding, which had the unfortunate side effect of damping down the gene that provides a tomato's sweetness. That too is genetic modification, but no one is pressing for labels on hybridized or selectively bred crops.

There are justified concerns about genetically engineered foods. Some have contributed to the rise of pesticide-resistant weeds and been linked to the decimation of monarch butterfly populations in the Midwest. In addition, because the crops' DNA is owned and controlled by the companies that produce them, such as Monsanto, tough questions should be asked about the risks of having so much of the country's food supply owned by a couple of companies. Some 85 percent or more of the corn and soybeans grown in the United States is genetically modified.

But consumers who want to avoid bioengineered foods have many ways of accomplishing that. Organic food is by definition not genetically engineered. Some producers of cornstarch and other products offer, and label, non-engineered versions for a higher price. Trader Joe's has announced that all of the foods sold under its brand name are not sourced from bioengineered crops, and there are websites and apps devoted to selecting non-engineered foods. If there is a growing demand for such foods, the market will find a way to offer them.

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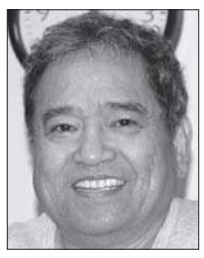
Test the standards

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.



In medical usage, tests are meant to be diagnostic, providing a clinical purview on a physical condition to a medical practitioner. After a test, a doctor, based on practice and experience, prescribes remedies when there is a malady, and provides a reasonable prognosis on what the future holds with or without medication. Tests liberate one from the dark corners of ignorance to the comfort of informed innocence!

Standardized tests in schools are achievement tests, which measure one's ability to stack alphabet blocks but has nothing to do with the price of rice in China. That standards do exist is a given, and we would not want our medical doctor to run the clinic without standards. Measured against a standard is a starting point, not an end nor a destination of a journey.

Might you guess that we are not in the main flow of contemporary educational aims on standards?

It would be quite inaccurate to categorize us as an anarchist *sans* regard for norms and measures. For we do appreciate learned and refined social manners and etiquette, as well as a well-monitored and temperature-regulated cellars of aging Chardonnay. They require close attention to standards. But we are talking about the wonderful world of humans whose genetics and history are as diverse as their individual numbers. That's where schools get lazy. We design one-size tests to fit all.

For so long, education has been taught as the transmittal of knowledge from one generation to the next so that a social milieu may continue. Whether it is the continuation of progress as imagined in the movement from agrarian society to the industrial age, the intent is to domesticate society to preset knowledge, elaborate on acceptable styles, and venerate chosen icons and symbols.

When the Russians sent Sputnik into orbit, Western education went into spasms of insecurity that was allayed only when it shifted learning from the arts to science. Words and numbers represent the symbol system of any civilization. Thus, the business of U.S. mass education has become the mastery of words—now enshrined in staid "rule of law" and the relationship of units-to-sum, parts-to-the-whole in numeral understandings. Sadly, the world follows our lead.

The business of education has become a matter of memorizing established knowledge (of experts, or those who use the same idioms of a particular field) contained in textbooks, at the expense of critical thinking brought about by observing, meditating, and contemplating the discoveries from experience and the wisdom from shared learning.

Students have become peons trained to be fed into the cogs of industries to produce consumer goods, to hang on organizational frames imposed on processes, staff automated procedures, and monitor the periodic convulsions of finances attached to the systems of distribution. Humanity has become captive to the world of words and numbers.

We are partial to full awareness of experience before the sophistication in abstract notions. Concept comes only after consciousness of sense perceptions. In our language class, we encourage and facilitate the use of language to begin describing sense experiences (see, hear, smell, taste, touch) before anything else. Verbs trump nouns. This comes hard for those trained to handle concepts, deriving authority from footnotes, dancing through the steps of "compare and contrast."

Students are generally not encouraged to express feelings unless they are in the arts where emotions find their way in non-literary audiovisual, tactile, olfactory, culinary, and other kinesthetic modes. Expression of what is personal is not kosher. So we ask students to keep a journal or a diary from where they read an event they wrote as part of their language exercise.

In China, one can talk about everything except one's self. A culture of silence surrounds the personal. That data is deemed secret.

Articulating thoughts comes easier, often practiced as the summary of an experts' logic. Abstraction is the language of medieval West. Greatness is located in either the profound depth of experience, and/or the heightened sense of ecstasy, all relegated to the realm of mystery and eternity. History and prophecy are predetermined by a force outside an individual's psyche, found at one time in palms and tarot cards (now in statistical probabilities) to ascertain fate and destiny, or to surrender to divine providence.

In the medieval world, nouns and adjectives proliferate, and those of us learned in this "college" are rightfully accused of high-falutin' language. Unused to the courage to dare, we formulate acts and deeds in straitjackets of norms and kowtow to what is socially appropriate. We do not turn robots into becoming more human; we program humans to be robotic.

Today's revolution is participatory democracy. Folk need to describe their experiences and in the process, get to own their consciousness. They are to be encouraged to express feelings rather than hide behind the cell phone, cogitate rather than mouth the ranting of others, and act on a personal sense of will rather than just follow what is fashionable. Telling one's story is key to freighting consciousness.

A standard test is a tool. To educate is the task.

Mañan lamañana

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*

Mafondu batkota gi halom Pacific Ring of Fire, i mas taduñg na patte gi tasin Pasifiku. Kada unu rinimulilinu ni chubaskon man-loka' lañgat ya tat seguru na guaha u felis. Ni un' tanu' a'anog gi puntan tasi. Mientras tantos kada unu umaligau mamaisague' gi halom mattirun diskuidun kapitan.

Otru estotbu i mandañkulu halu'u ni ti man-a'anog gi sanpapa'. Haye u tinichu' 'sino soplu gaige todu gi haf' disposision ginen hilu'.

Mafondu batkota pot diskuidu. Matuñgu' ha' ni kapitan yan marineru na gaige gi lachagu' mona un' trosun ais (iceberg). 'Nai ta sufa', sige hit ta cheflague i puntan ais dimas de tafalague i boti puede man-libre hit. Lastima sa'mañogñog i batkon moneda nos pot katgadu fiñkas lau mampos ñahlalañg sa' tai sinahguan ayu mina blinañku katkuet direksion ni chubasko.

Ta fatinas mohon halom gi katkuet tanu' ni mas hihot? Kuantu para u fan tinichu' ga'ga' yan kuantu para u fan matmos? I ta sasañgan i mafondu na ekonomia-ta ni gaige fondun tasi. Dudayu' kau guaha kampu para ta hatsa hulu' sa' disgranau 35 miyas papa'.

Kutturan Ingayinau

Lastima sa' pinilota na 'an ta elihe i mas man-a'gañg man-mama' promesa u guaha adelantu gi linala'ta. Apmam de maletke inapasen obligasion gobietnu gi programan man-ritirau. Gaige esta i kolebla ni dos iluña gi pettan sanme'na.

Lokue', deste ke mapua i batkota (ekonomia) gi hiniyoñg fakterian magagu yan otru siha man-dañosu na areglon ginen hiyoñg yan sanhalom, ni unu mumueba kalañgke'ña para u ataha i tatatte na dañu siha. Todu mañgakanta "Don't worry, be happy…"

Megai pa'gu mampos man-magof na katkuet ora 'nai un' atan, man-tutuhu' lagu' niha sa' mas klaru na mampos poble i tanu'. Ti apmam yan pa'gu siempre man-abende hit dadeg yan mahlug lapes entalu' Microl giya Oleai yan Micro Beach.

Ai, finu' amiguhu Buddy Magoo, "I don't know Maria!" Mas makat i mamamaila' ke destrosiun iya Oklahoma ni prinensa tubun mapagahes (tornado) gi mapos na semana. Fan man-gu'ot fitme sa' mampos abarambau finalagon sahyan-ta kareton.

Rimulinon Ira giya Oklahoma

Hinigua' rimulinon tubun mapagahes (tornado) 'nos kuantos komunida giya Oklahoma ti mapos na semana. Ayu na fina' mañglu' esta dos sientos miyas gi ora finalaguguña. Tat ti ha bogbug gi halom bente miyas na distansia 'nai malofan.

I mangai tiempu ensegidas mafalague fina' budega yan man-atog. Memegaiña famaguon gi mas ke bente ni man-dimalas. Deste gobietnon federat papa' esta estadu man-daña para uma'ayuda i tautau siha rumikohe haf" siña mareskata gi hagas kosas niha.

Ayu na patte gi Estadon iya Oklahoma pot dos besis hinigua' ni parehu destrosiu. Kulan chalan tubun mapagahes taimanu Marianas ni gaige gi katsadan pagyu.

Otru asuntun komunida

Guaha siha chetnot na solu i hospitat 'nai siña tinatme hau tat kumu chetnot gofes ni esta guaha siha man-inaminasa. Guiya este na chetnot 'nai mañahguan hanom i gofesmu. Poresu, muñga malag i hospitat yangin ti malañgu hau.

Muñga lokue'makone famaguon guatu sin presisu. Suhaye lokue' ayu siha i manlololu' sa' tat presisu na un' tinemba fotten sagu. I hospitat para man-malañgu. Trabiha ti hu sosoda' hospitat para man-homlu'.

■■■

Mafaisen un' amiguhu haye-gue' na familia. Ensegidas ha oppe, "Familian ga'ga!" Man-matman i humuñgog rinipuestaña. Ha dobla umesplika, "Ai agun, nanahu si Jacintan paluma, tatahu si Josen galagu". A` Saina!

■■■

'Nai duru uchan, ni unu mamagte hanom para usun halom guma'. Mas insuttu 'nai pañgpañg dañkulun uchan dispues mattu i bisinu man-gagau hanom. A` Saina!

■■■

Sige hit mañguentos pot mampos megai tautau hiyuñg guine. 'Nai machum i pettan fakterian magagu, mana fan hanau tatte lokue' mit tantos na empleau. Maribaha i numeron tautau. Kontodu bisnis siha piot lugat chumochu man-inaminasa. Lamegai lokue' humuchum bisnis niha. Sin bisnis makat ta kubre nesessidat-ta.

Finu' un' tiuhu 'nai ha huchum bisnesña, "Pagu na tiempu ihu, maseha monkey bisnis mauleg ha' para guaha". Makat na offisiu gi halom fache' un' manadan tax yan guaguan na apas kandet yan hanom. De dios mihu uttimoña paraisun tautau islas. Ti este guinifita pat haf' mohon? Malag manu i inefresen "better times?"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Regents cannot let this egregious decision stand

It came as a shock yesterday morning, when I learned that the powers-that-be at NMC terminated Larry Lee and escorted him off campus. I learned from more than a half a dozen other instructors as the day went on that they were just as shocked and repulsed by what happened. Larry wasn't the only outspoken faculty who received walking papers either… Mr. Kyle Podziewski did as well.

At the Dec. 24 meeting of the NMC Board of Regents, Larry said, "I really care about this institution and I'm really putting my neck on the line here and I hope the board protects me from retaliation." Others who spoke out at that meeting about problems they saw with the NMC administration also stated their fears of retaliation.

We know Larry Lee. We know him to be an upstanding member of this community, who has spent countless hours of his time volunteering for everything from the Red Cross to the MyWave Club. We know Larry to be an outstanding instructor, who goes above and beyond for his students. We know Larry to be amazingly competent and knowledgeable. We know Larry to be kind and caring. We know Larry is here for the long haul and is invested in this community. We know Larry is exactly the kind of faculty our college needs.

I have heard and read countless comments by instructors, staff, and students of NMC since the breaking of this news attesting to these same feelings, and expressing the same disgust and dismay at hearing this news of his termination.

So we know Larry. We know he has invested his heart and soul in this community.

What do we know about those who would see him removed? We know that they are *not* invested in this community. We know that they have stated that they never spend more than six years at an institution. We know that they have used their influence and position to fortify their power at *our* institution of higher learning. We know that they have received a vote of "no confidence" by the faculty of other institutions (and still unbelievably were hired at ours). We know that they have taken advantage of their position at *our* institution to attempt to benefit their family members. We know that they have not adequately addressed the accreditation issues and have in fact created and/or exacerbated problems with the institution's faculty and staff. And we know that they have in tyrannical fashion now gone after those who spoke out against them. These things we know.

We also know that it made no sense to bring on a president who had previously received a 95-1 "no confidence" vote by the faculty of a previous institution she served at. The president received a 19-4 "no confidence" vote by our own faculty. The community is still scratching our collective head as to why the Board of Regents would have ever seen fit to employ such an individual? The community is scratching our collective head wondering why the Board of Regents has permitted the president to run roughshod over the faculty? The community is scratching their collective head wondering how long the Board of Regents is going to let this go on before they remedy the situation? The community is now wondering if the Board of Regents is going to stand behind our NMC faculty?

This is the opportunity for the Board of Regents to don a façade of competence. This is the opportunity for the Board of Regents to right a serious wrong and lay the foundation for correcting a serious error and ensuring that grievous harm to this institution will not go unchallenged. This is an opportunity for the Board of Regents to instill some community faith in the institution.

Stand up for Larry Lee as he counted on you to do when he was courageous enough to speak out, and say those things that many already knew but few had the courage to say. Stand up for this community and the faculty of our college who are members of this community, and invested in this community. Stand up for the college and accept that there have been serious errors in judgment.

These continued petty, personal, and political actions are directly attributable to the loss of legitimacy in and the support for NMC by the community. In the end, this lack of support by the community is going to do the college in. We know that the current president will be long gone in a few years, and she will have left a wake of destruction where the college and where the lives of capable instructors whose homes and lives are here for the long term are concerned.

Here are just a few of the many faculty, staff and student statements on social media this evening: "Larry Lee is a great teacher. He has gone above and beyond the line of duty to serve our youth, NMC, and this community. This is *not* how we thank him or others for caring about the CNMI. To "release" someone of their duty because they disagreed with you is called oppression and tyranny. I will not tolerate that in our community." "I'm really saddened by this news. I worked with Larry and cannot believe how he was treated." "Pretty sad and disgusted." "I'm disappointed in so many levels. The president's power is an illusion." "It sickens me." "Larry was a wonderful teacher and did not deserve this."

This resident and citizen demands that the Board of Regents of our community college do what it must to protect the institution's faculty, especially faculty that are truly members of this community, and see the immediate reinstatement of Larry Lee.

Robert H. Hunter
Garapan, Saipan

Plight of US citizens in the CNMI

Historically, U.S. politicians follow the money and cast their support for the powerful, generally meaning their big business financial supporters.

Former governor Ben Fitial, who was an instrumental conspirator in the Jack Abramoff-Tom Delay bribery of the U.S. House of Representatives scandal to block federalization, did that with his unwavering support in exchange for enormous and still ongoing payments from NMI big business. The Saipan Chamber of Commerce including the tourist shopping district, Gov. Eloy Inos, the hotel association called HANMI who has long exploited cheap labor and avoided hiring citizens, and now apparently our representative to the U.S. House of Representatives also opposes an increase in the minimum wage here and seeks "to delay the implementation of the 50-cent annual minimum wage increase."

Fifty cents can buy half a small bottle of water, 1 hamburger bun, or a fourth of a McDonald's cheeseburger in the CNMI.

What's worse is that the bill "also seeks to extend the federal immigration transition period in the CNMI to another five years," forcing unemployed citizens, young and old, to compete with cheap alien labor.

And what is much worse, at least for U.S. citizens, is that it also seeks to *extend the E2-C visa classification for foreign investors*. According to USCIS, there is no U.S. investor visas in the CNMI. A U.S. investor visa, or EB5, allows foreign investors a visa for investing a minimum of $500,000 and employing 10 U.S. citizens. Investors seeking to live and do business in the U.S. are welcome provided they employ U.S. citizens.

From DHS: "The CNMI-only investor status will cease to exist at the end of the transition period. Although the Secretary of Labor may extend the CNMI-only transitional worker program, the investor provisions will terminate on Dec. 31, 2014, regardless of whether the transitional worker provisions are extended."

I would favor extending the E2-C if that visa required hiring citizens but it doesn't, so the application of U.S. transitional investor visa laws as they stand now will finally provide opportunity for citizens here. If the E2-C classification for foreign investors is extended, it is a terrible tragedy for local U.S. citizens—meaning no employment and no opportunity for our young citizens to open small business, a shame and disgraceful calamity.

Only two previous commenters supported an extension of the E2-C on regulations that were publicly debated in the news for years.

Application of that law is a huge win for local citizens, but if this proposed legislation passes, U.S. citizens here lose again. The young citizens here will again be sent to the back of the bus, unable to compete with alien operators who continue to hire cheap foreign labor.

To oppose such a disaster, we must demand that the U.S. Congress conduct a public hearing on and comment period, as the last comment period on this subject made the position of citizens loud and clear and we had hoped final, and I can assure you another will prove the opinions of citizens on this matter again.

And given the CNMI history with corruption and bribery, this situation warrants a full investigation to sort out the big business funding and alien financial influences deciding such a crucial issue for our citizens before they are irreparably harmed.

"Kilili says wage hike delay will save jobs," but since the supporters of this bill also funded Abramoff and hire few citizens, we must ask, "who are we saving the jobs for?"

Ron Hodges
Puerto Rico, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds around 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds 5 to 10 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Southeast winds 5 to 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°

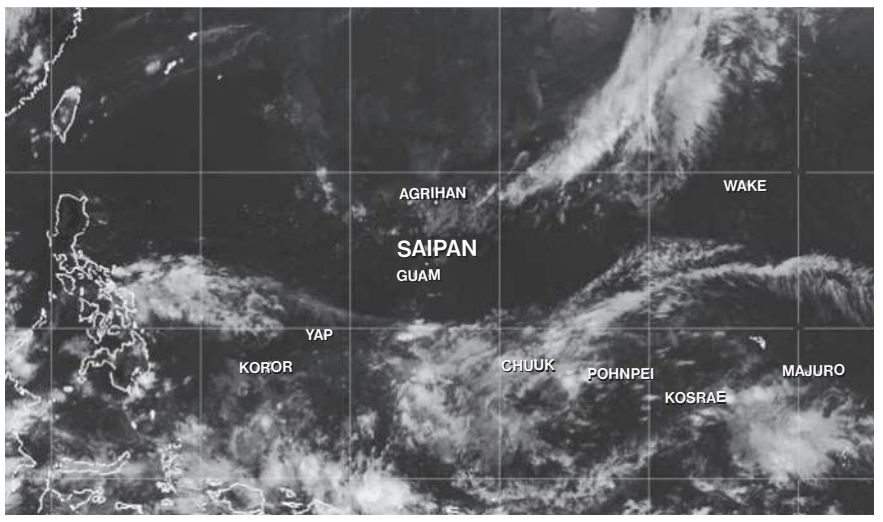
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	▲89	▼81
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼75
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲93	▼77
Chuuk	Showers	▲87	▼80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼80
Kosrae	Showers	▲86	▼80
Majuro	Showers	▲86	▼80

Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲62	▼54
Beijing	Sunny	▲92	▼62
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲84	▼79
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼73
London	Showers	▲59	▼51
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲80	▼63
Manila	Thundershowers	▲92	▼81
Melbourne	Showers	▲63	▼54
Miami	Showers	▲81	▼76
New York	Thundershowers	▲84	▼68
Osaka	Showers	▲75	▼62
Paris	Showers	▲58	▼50
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲77	▼63
Rome	Thunderstorms	▲62	▼51
Salem	Showers	▲61	▼48
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲61	▼51
Seoul	Sunny	▲78	▼55
Tokyo	Showers	▲75	▼65
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲90	▼70

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2013
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from northeast of Minami Tori Shima at 25N160E to over the far Northern Marianas at 19N145E then curves northwestward as a stationary front to 25N136E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are present along and up to 170 miles northwest of the cold front from 25N160E to 19N151E. Low-level convergence ahead of the cold front is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms northwest of Wake Island within 100 miles of a line from 19N159E to 25N163E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms associated with an area of low pressure are found south of Koror south of a line from 5N130E to 4N136E to 1N141E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms associated with a trade-wind disturbance are located primarily west of Chuuk between 10N and 1N from 143E to 147E. An upper-level trough is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms northeast of Chuuk and north of Pohnpei within 60 miles of a line from 13N160E to 8N153E. Another trade-wind disturbance is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms southwest of the Marshall Islands and just east of Kosrae between 6N and the equator from 163E to 171E. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers southeast Majuro within 120 miles of a line from 3N171E to 4N180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

1:15 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
7:08 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
11:48 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
7:03 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	5:46 AM	6:43 PM
Friday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM
Saturday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM
Sunday	5:46 AM	6:44 PM
Monday	5:46 AM	6:45 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:31 PM	10:41 AM
Friday		11:38 AM
Saturday	12:16 AM	12:32 PM
Sunday	12:58 AM	1:24 PM
Monday	1:39 AM	2:15 PM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MAY 23, 2013

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)			
UA5070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 4, 6, 7
UA5062	4:50am	5:40am	1, 3, 5
UA5068	8:35am	9:25am	Daily
UA5074	11:20am	12:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5076	3:10pm	4:00pm	Daily
UA5078	6:55pm	7:45pm	Daily
UA5072	9:45pm	10:35pm	Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)			
DL287	6:05am	8:45am	Daily
DL297	4:35pm	7:25pm	Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)			
OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)			
OZ606	2:20am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:30pm	6:55pm	Daily
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)			
3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)			
MU764	4:10am	8:00am	1, 5
SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)			
3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6
SAIPAN-KHABAROVSK (KHV)			
SYL9950	6:40pm	1:30am+1	7
SAIPAN-VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)			
XF1734	4:15pm	10:30pm	4 Every other week eff May 16
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)			
OZ606/701	2:20am	11:05am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:50am	11:05am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/191	4:35am	9:55am	6 via GUM
UA5062/191	4:50am	9:55am	3 via GUM
DL287/173	6:05am	10:05pm	Daily via NRT
UA5068/PR111	8:35am	4:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
US5074/PR111	11:20am	4:35pm	1, 5, 7 via GUM
UA5076/183	3:10pm	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5076/183	3:10pm	8:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:30pm	10:45pm	Daily via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)			
OZ606/721	2:20am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5076/147	3:10pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
OZ604/745	3:30pm	10:40pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA 5069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 4, 6, 7
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA5073	10:00am	10:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
UA5075	1:45pm	2:35pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5077	5:35pm	6:25pm	Daily
UA5079	8:20pm	9:10pm	Daily
ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN			
UA5062	3:45am	4:20am	1, 3, 5
UA5038	11:15am	11:50am	6
NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
DL298	10:25am	3:05pm	Daily
DL288	8:15pm	12:50am+1	Daily
BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
OZ607	9:05pm	1:55am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
OZ603	8:50am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ605	8:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN			
3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	1, 4, 6, 7
BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN			
MU763	7:55pm	3:10am+1	4, 7
GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN			
3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5
KHABAROVSK (KHV)-SAIPAN			
SYL9949	12:45pm	5:20pm	7
VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)-SAIPAN			
XF1733	11:20am	3:25pm	4 Every other week eff May 16
MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
PR110/UA5072	7:55am	6:25pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
DL172/288	8:00am	12:50am+1	Daily via NRT
UA190/5077	10:55am	6:25pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/5079	10:55am	9:10pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:15pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ704/603	11:45pm	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
UA184/5071	11:35pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:10pm	1:45am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:45pm	8:05am+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:50pm	8:05am+1	3, 6 GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

Business

Economic gains lift US confidence to a 5-year high

WASHINGTON (AP)—Home prices are surging. Job growth is strengthening. And stocks are setting record highs.

All of which explains why Americans are more hopeful about the economy than at any other point in five years.

Consider Michael Quintos, head of a Chicago advertising agency that helps small businesses market themselves through social media. Quintos sees more optimism at work and among friends and relatives.

"A year ago, I had more friends asking me if I knew anybody who was hiring," he says. "Now I have more people who are hiring asking me if I know anyone looking for a job."

At work, Quintos is finding it easier to land customers. In the past couple of months, businesses that have asked about his services have been more likely to follow through and hire him. A year ago, most were wary.

"I've had more work than I can handle," Quintos says. As a result, his firm hired a web designer last week.

Investors on Tuesday celebrated the latest buoyant reports on consumer confidence and housing prices, which together suggest that growth could accelerate in the second half of 2013.

Greater confidence could spur people to spend more and help offset tax increases and federal spending cuts. And the fastest rise in home prices in seven years might lead more Americans to put houses on the market, easing supply shortages that have kept the housing recovery from taking off.

AP

Trader Gregory Rowe on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Tuesday, May 28, 2013. Americans are more confident in the U.S. economy than at any point in the past five years, thanks to surging home values, a brighter job market and record-setting stock prices

A report from the Conference Board, a private research group, showed that consumer confidence jumped in May to a reading of 76.2, up from 69 in April. That's the highest level since February 2008, two months after the Great Recession officially began.

A separate report showed that U.S. home prices jumped nearly 11 percent in March compared with a year ago, the sharpest 12-month increase since April 2006. Prices rose year over year in all 20 cities in the Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller home price index.

The economic news helped send the Dow Jones industrial average up 106 points to close at a record. The Dow has rocketed nearly 18 percent this year. And the Standard & Poor's 500 stock index is on track for its seventh straight monthly gain, the longest winning streak since 2009.

Surging stock prices and steady home-price increases have allowed Americans to regain the $16 trillion in wealth they lost to the Great Recession. Higher wealth tends to embolden people to spend more. Some economists have said the increase in home prices alone could boost consumer spending enough to offset a Social Security tax increase that has reduced paychecks for most Americans this year.

The Conference Board survey said consumers are also more optimistic about the next six months. That should translate into greater consumer spending, substantial growth in hiring and faster economic growth in the second half of 2013, says Thomas Feltmate, an economist with TD Economics.

Mothers now top earners in 4 in 10 US households

By HOPE YEN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

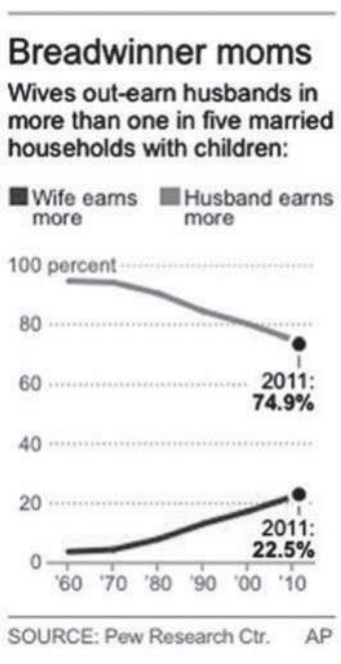
WASHINGTON (AP)—A record number of American women are now the sole or primary breadwinners in their families, a sign of the rising influence of working mothers, a new study finds. Mothers now keep finances afloat in 40 percent of households with children, up from just 11 percent in 1960.

While most of these families are headed by single mothers, a growing number are married mothers who bring in more income than their husbands, according to a study released Wednesday by the Pew Research Center.

As the numbers have shifted, however, public attitudes have remained mixed regarding the impact of working mothers on families. People are not at all sure that it's a good thing.

Demographers say the change is all but irreversible and is likely to bring added attention to child-care policies as well as government safety nets for vulnerable families.

"This change is just another milestone in the dramatic transformation we have seen in family structure and family dynamics over the past 50 years or so," said Kim Parker, associate director with the Pew Social & Demographic Trends Project. "Women's roles have changed, marriage rates have declined - the family looks a lot different than it used to. The rise of breadwinner moms highlights the fact that, not only are more mothers balancing work and family these days, but the economic contributions mothers are making to their households have grown immensely."



ON THE NET
http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/

The trend is being driven mostly by long-term demographic changes, including higher rates of education and labor force participation dating back to the 1960s women's movement. Today, women are more likely than men to hold bachelor's degrees, and they make up nearly half—47 percent—of the American workforce.

But recent changes in the economy, too, have played a part. Big job losses in manufacturing and construction, fields that used to provide high pay to a mostly male workforce, have lifted the relative earnings of married women, even among those in mid-level positions such as teachers, nurses or administrators. The jump in working women has been especially prominent among those who are mothers—from 37 percent in 1968 to 65 percent in 2011—reflecting in part increases for those who went looking for jobs to lift sagging family income after the recent recession.

Tax overhaul: Looking to IRS scandal for momentum

WASHINGTON (AP)—The storm engulfing the Internal Revenue Service could provide a boost for lawmakers who want to simplify U.S. tax laws - a code that is so complicated most Americans buy commercial software to help them or simply hire someone else to do it all.

Members of Congress from both political parties say the current uproar—over the targeting of conservative political groups—underscores that overly complex tax provisions have given the IRS too much discretion in interpreting and enforcing the law.

"This is the perfect example of why we need tax reform," said Rep. Tim Griffin, R-Ark., a member of the tax-writing House Ways and Means Committee. "If you want to diminish and limit the power of the IRS, you have got to reduce the complexity of the tax code and take them out of it."

There are still formidable obstacles to completing a major tax overhaul this year or next. Democrats and Republicans start off with opposite views on whether the government should levy more taxes and on who should pay what share. The two sides also don't trust one another, making it difficult to envision agreement on which popular tax breaks to keep and which to scrap.

Most taxpayers pay someone to do their taxes or they buy commercial software to help them file. In a report earlier this year, national taxpayer advocate Nina E. Olson ranked complexity as the most serious problem facing both taxpayers and the IRS. People simply trying to comply with the rules often make inadvertent errors and overpay or underpay, she said, while others "often find loopholes that enable them to reduce or eliminate their tax liabilities."

7 charged in $6B online money laundering case

NEW YORK (AP)—Calling it perhaps the biggest money laundering scheme in U.S. history, federal prosecutors charged seven people Tuesday with running what amounted to an online, underworld bank that handled $6 billion for drug dealers, child pornographers, identity thieves and other criminals around the globe.

The case was aimed at Liberty Reserve, a currency transfer and payment processing company based in Costa Rica that authorities say allowed customers to move money anonymously from one account to another via the Internet with almost no questions asked.

U.S. officials said the enterprise was staggering in scope: Over roughly seven years, Liberty Reserve processed 55 million illicit transactions worldwide for 1 million users, including 200,000 in the U.S.

The network "became the bank of choice for the criminal underworld," U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara said in announcing the unsealing of an indictment against the defendants, including Liberty Revenue founder Arthur Budovsky, an American who renounced his U.S. citizenship after deciding to set up in Costa Rica.

Liberty Reserve allowed users to open accounts using fictitious names, including "Russian Hacker" and "Hacker Account." An undercover investigator was able to register using the name "Joe Bogus" and the address "123 Fake Main Street" in "Completely Made Up City, New York," and then conduct transactions he recorded as "ATM skimming network" and "for the cocaine."

"The coin of the realm was anonymity," Bharara said. "It was the opposite of a know-your-customer policy."

The network charged a 1 percent fee on transactions through middlemen known as exchangers, who converted real currency into virtual funds and then back into cash.

In the indictment, prosecutors called the network "one of the principal means by which cyber criminals around the world distribute, store and launder proceeds of their illegal activity ... including credit card fraud, identity theft, investment fraud, computer hacking, child pornography and narcotics trafficking."

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Essential Home Bunk Bed **$249.95**

Essential Home Shoe Organizer 15 Pair **$29.95**

Kidnik Childrens Picnic Table **$59.95**

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MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

Nation

Derailment, blast near Baltimore rattles homes

ROSEDALE, Md. (AP)—A CSX freight train crashed into a trash truck, derailed and caught fire Tuesday in a Baltimore suburb, setting off an explosion that rattled homes at least a half-mile away and sent a plume of smoke into the air that could be seen for miles.

In the third serious derailment this month, the dozen or so rail cars, at least one carrying hazardous materials, went off the tracks at about 2 p.m. in Rosedale, a suburb east of Baltimore. A hazardous materials team responded, but Baltimore County Executive Kevin Kamenetz said at a news conference that no toxic inhalants were being released. Officials did not order an evacuation.

By nightfall, the hazmat team had left, meaning there was no more danger posed from the chemicals in the rail car, said Baltimore County police Capt. Bruce Schultz.

The truck driver, 50-year-old John J. Alban Jr., was in serious condition Tuesday night, a hospital spokeswoman said. Two CSX workers aboard weren't hurt.

Dale Walston said he lives about a half-mile away and that he thought he could smell chemicals.

"It shook my house pretty violently and knocked things off the shelves," he said in an email to The Associated Press.

The face of one warehouse near the train tracks was blown off.

Even hours after the blast, the thick plume of black smoke could be seen for miles and had drifted and covered the eastern part of Baltimore. Later, the smoke that was left had lightened considerably, changing from black to gray, though the fire wasn't yet extinguished as of 9 p.m.

AP

A fire burns at the site of a CSX freight train derailment, Tuesday, May 28, 2013, in Rosedale, Md., where fire officials say the train crashed into a trash truck, causing an explosion that rattled homes at least a half-mile away and collapsed nearby buildings, setting them on fire.

CSX spokesman Gary Sease said in an email that one of the cars was carrying sodium chlorate, which the Department of Transportation classifies as a hazardous material. However, Baltimore County Fire Chief John Hohman said the chemical was not in any of the cars that were still burning into the evening. The bleaching agent is used in making paper.

Nick Materer, an Oklahoma State University chemist, said sodium chlorate, when combined with fuel, makes a more volatile mixture. "When you mix them together and add fire, they go boom," he said in a phone interview.

Materer said the chemical is usually shipped as a white powder but it can also be in a liquid solution. Either way, he said, the fumes can irritate the lungs if inhaled.

Exactly what triggered the explosion was being investigated, and Hohman said firefighters told residents of about 70 nearby homes that they could leave if they wanted to and shelter would be provided.

Two warehouses were heavily damaged by the explosion and other buildings were harmed, but none collapsed, as was thought earlier, Hohman said.

An Amtrak spokeswoman said its Northeast Corridor passenger service was not affected.

Kevin Lindemann, 29, a salesman for industrial pipe supplier Baltimore Windustrial near the tracks, said he and about 10 coworkers felt the ground shake, ran to a window and saw several cars on their sides and flames he estimated at 50 feet high.

Passengers describe calm scene after cruise fire

LINTHICUM, Md. (AP)—Passengers whose cruise vacations were cut short by a fire onboard the *Grandeur of the Seas* arrived back home Tuesday on charter flights from the Bahamas, many praising the crew's response and some already planning their next sailings.

Rebecca Killinger of Carlisle, Pa., said she had no idea how extensive the fire was until she debarked in Freeport, Bahamas. Photos of the Royal Caribbean ship show a large area of the stern charred on several decks.

She credited the crew's calm, orderly response. "The crew was in total control, and there was no chaos," she said, and some cracked jokes to lighten the mood.

Passengers described being awoken in their cabins as crewmembers knocked on doors and sent them to evacuation stations with their life jackets shortly after the fire broke out at 2:50 a.m. Monday.

Robert Alexander of Hamilton, N.J., said crew members from all parts of the Grandeur were involved. An actor from the ship's theater made announcements as passengers left their rooms.

"It just shows the training they do," Alexander said. "Our head waiter at our dinner table was one of the first responders."

Royal Caribbean says life boats were not boarded and power was never lost. The fire was extinguished in about two hours, with no injuries reported among the 2,200 passengers or the crew. The ship, which left Baltimore on Friday for a seven-night cruise, was headed originally to CocoCay, Bahamas, but instead sailed to Freeport on Monday afternoon. It remained there Tuesday.

The vice president of the Grand Bahama Shipyard said the ship would be repaired at his facility, though a full assessment of damage hadn't been done yet. "I'm assuming it will be a big job for us," Reuben Byrd said.

Royal Caribbean spokeswoman Cynthia Martinez said late Tuesday that repairs would be carried out at the shipyard. The cause of the fire was not immediately known.

Byrd said the shipyard didn't know the cause either. National Transportation Safety Board spokesman Eric Weiss said the agency has sent one senior investigator to the Bahamas. No other details about the investigation were available.

Marine's mom doesn't know what led to rampage

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP)—The mother of a Marine killed after a shooting spree that left one dead in Texas said Tuesday that she doesn't know what prompted the attacks, including the stabbing of his wife in North Carolina.

Lance Cpl. Esteban J. Smith, a 23-year-old Marine, died Sunday in a gunfight with Texas authorities after a shooting rampage that left one person dead and several hospitalized. Authorities believe Smith fatally stabbed his wife, Rubi Estefania Smith of Bakersfield, Calif., in a Jacksonville, N.C., motel room near Camp Lejeune before the shooting rampage.

Esteban Smith's mother, Rosalva Jimenez, told The Associated Press in a phone interview Tuesday that she last spoke to her son on Thursday. She said her daughter-in-law had recently traveled from their California hometown to North Carolina to surprise him. She said her last phone conversation with her son was brief because he was at work and that she knew of nothing that would have led to the crimes.

"He was OK, but he went crazy all of a sudden," she said, speaking in Spanish.

She said her son had just married his wife in December and that he was preparing to leave the armed forces. "He wanted to come back, go to college, become a mechanical engineer," she said.

Smith was a veteran of two combat tours in Afghanistan, but Jimenez said she never asked him about what happened there. "I didn't want to hear," she said, adding that she hadn't wanted her son to go to war.

She also said she didn't know of any problems between her son and his wife. "Maybe they argued and he went crazy," she said.

Authorities have said the Texas victims were likely randomly targeted but have not said why Smith made the 1,500-mile trip to the town of Eden or where he may have been going.

"I imagine he was in Texas because maybe he was driving home" to Bakersfield, his mother said. "That's the road he would take."

Jimenez said she's sad for the people affected but that her son wasn't a monster.

"He was a very bright, quiet, calm man. He was the type of person that would not even like when you would raise your voice," she said.

ACROSS THE NATION

Colorado marijuana regulations signed into law

DENVER (AP)—A set of laws to govern how recreational marijuana should be grown, sold and taxed was signed into law Tuesday in Colorado, where Democratic Gov. John Hickenlooper called the measures the state's best attempt to navigate the uncharted territory of legalized recreational pot. The laws cover how the drug should be raised and packaged, with purchasing limits for out-of-state visitors and a new marijuana driving limit as an analogy to blood alcohol levels. Hickenlooper didn't support marijuana legalization last year, but he praised the regulatory package as a good first crack at safely overseeing the drug. "Recreational marijuana is really a completely new entity," Hickenlooper said, calling the pot rules "commonsense" oversight, such as required potency labeling and a requirement that marijuana is to be sold in child-proof opaque packing with labels clearly stating the drug may not be safe.

Healthy quintuplets born in Salt Lake hospital

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—A Utah woman gave birth to a healthy set of quintuplets over the weekend with help from a team of eight doctors, one anesthesiologist and dozens of nurses ensuring the mother and the tiny babies survived. Guillermina and Fernando Garcia's five babies—three girls and two boys—weigh between 2 and 3 pounds each and are expected to stay at the University of Utah hospital in Salt Lake City for another six weeks. Doctors predict they will grow up completely healthy. Guillermina Garcia, 34, carried the babies until 31 1/2 weeks—seven weeks shorter than most single-birth pregnancies but about three weeks longer than most quintuplet mothers. The extra time in the womb helped the babies' lungs develop more than other quintuplets, said Dr. Elizabeth O'Brien, of the newborn intensive care unit. "They are all doing remarkably well," O'Brien said. It was the first set of quintuplets ever born at the hospital. Fewer than 10 quintuplet sets are born each year in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention counted 37 babies who were born as part of a set of five or more in 2010.

Asia

Mosque, orphanage burned in Myanmar violence

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Sectarian violence spread to a new region of Myanmar, with a mob burning down a mosque, a Muslim orphanage and shops in a northeastern town after rumors spread that a Muslim man had set fire to a Buddhist woman, authorities said Wednesday.

There were no reported fatalities, according to a police officer and a Buddhist monk in Lashio, the remote northern town near China's border where the violence erupted Tuesday night. The full extent of the unrest was still unclear, with no immediate reports of how many people may have been injured.

Deadly sectarian violence between Buddhists and Muslims has occurred since last year in other parts of the country, first in a western region and then in central towns. The new flare-up will reinforce doubts that President Thein Sein's government can or will act to contain the violence.

The government quickly condemned the violence in a statement Wednesday that urged the public to stay calm.

"Damaging religious buildings and creating religious riots is inappropriate for the democratic society we are trying to create," presidential spokesman Ye Htut said on his Facebook page. The message cautiously noted that "two religious buildings and some shops" In Lashio were burned, without specifying if they were Muslim or Buddhist.

"Any criminal act will be dealt with according to the law," the statement said.

A Lashio police officer and a Buddhist monk contacted Wednesday morning by telephone said the town's largest mosque and a Muslim orphanage were among the buildings set afire after an irate mob of about 150 people rampaged through the town. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they feared for their safety.

The town was calm Wednesday morning after authorities imposed a security measure than bans gatherings of more than five people, the police officer said.

A politician in Lashio in Shan state, Sai Myint Maung, said the mob had initially gathered outside a police station demanding that the alleged culprit in the unconfirmed immolation be handed over.

According to the rumors, the man doused the woman with gasoline and set her alight. The attack could not be confirmed, but a Muslim-oriented news website that described it said the attacker was not Muslim.

Hacking overshadows closer US-China military ties

BEIJING (AP)—U.S. National Security Adviser Tom Donilon has pushed for stronger military relations with China as part of preparations for a summit next month between President Barack Obama and China's Xi Jinping.

However, difficulties establishing trust between the sides were underscored by new revelations Tuesday that China used cyberattacks to access data from nearly 40 Pentagon weapons programs and almost 30 other defense technologies, ranging from missile defense systems to the F-35 joint strike fighter.

The disclosure was included in a Defense Science Board report released earlier this year, but is only now being discussed publicly. It came shortly after Donilon wrapped up discussions with Chinese officials in Beijing and as Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel was heading to Southeast Asia for multinational talks on issues including the escalating cyberthreat.

While officials have been warning for years about China's cyber espionage efforts aimed at U.S. military and high-tech programs, the breadth of the list underscored how routine the attacks have become.

Donilon did not directly mention hacking in his opening comments at a meeting Tuesday morning with Gen. Fan Changlong, a vice chairman of the commission overseeing China's armed forces.

Instead, he emphasized that nontraditional military activities such as peacekeeping, disaster relief and anti-piracy operations offer opportunities to boost cooperation and "contribute to greater mutual confidence and understanding."

A "healthy, stable, and reliable military-to-military relationship" is an essential part of overall China-U.S. ties, Donilon said at the start of the meeting at China's hulking Defense Ministry building in central Beijing.

Donilon met with a range of Chinese officials over two days to hammer out plans for the June 7-8 summit, the first face-to-face meeting between the presidents since Obama's re-election and Xi's promotion to Communist Party chief last November.

Their informal summit at the private Sunnylands estate of the late publishing tycoon Walter Annenberg in southern California will come months before the two leaders had been originally scheduled to meet, underscoring concerns that the U.S-China relationship was drifting.

Xi told Donilon on Monday that relations were at a critical juncture, and that the sides must now "build on past successes and open up new dimensions for the future."

ASIAN BRIEFS

Reports: Woman who reported newborn in pipe is mom

BEIJING (AP)—A 22-year-old woman who raised the initial alarm about a newborn trapped in a sewer pipe in China kept quiet about being his mother even as she watched the sensational two-hour rescue unfold, reports said Wednesday. The woman, whose name was not revealed in state media reports, confessed to police a couple of days later when they asked her to undergo a medical checkup after searching her rented room and finding toys and blood-stained toilet paper, the state-run Zhejiang News website said. Firefighters were called Saturday to the residential building in the Pujiang area of the eastern Zhejiang province city of Jinhua to rescue a baby trapped in the L-joint of a sewage pipe just below a squat toilet in one of the building's public restrooms.

Officials: US drone kills 4 militants in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistani intelligence officials say a pair of suspected U.S. missiles fired from an unmanned aerial vehicle has killed four alleged foreign militants near the Afghan border. They say an American drone fired the missiles Wednesday into a house in Miran Shah, the main town of Pakistan's tribal region of North Waziristan. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

81-year-old Nepalese climber quits Everest attempt

KATMANDU, Nepal (AP)—An 81-year-old Nepalese man has abandoned his attempt to climb Mount Everest, leaving a Japanese mountaineer with the record as the oldest person to scale the world's highest mountain. Team member Dame said Wednesday that Min Bahadur Sherchan turned back Tuesday because weather conditions were worsening late in the spring climbing season for the Himalayas. He would have made the attempt sooner but had funding problems that were resolved only last week. Sherchan became the oldest Everest climber in 2008 at age 76. He held the record until last week, when 80-year-old Japanese climber Yuichiro Miura scaled the 8,850-meter (29,035-foot) mountain.

World

Syria diplomacy a priority, despite EU arms vote

AP

This image from amateur video obtained by a group which calls itself Ugarit News, which is consistent with AP reporting, shows a rebel fighter firing a mortar with the help of a drawstring in Aleppo, Syria, Tuesday, May 28, 2013.

BEIRUT (AP)—Russia on Tuesday harshly criticized Europe's decision to allow the arming of Syrian rebels, saying it undercuts international efforts to negotiate an end to the civil war, and a rebel general said he's "very disappointed" weapons won't come fast enough to help opposition fighters defend a strategic Syrian town.

The European Union decision, coupled with a Russia's renewed pledge to supply Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime with advanced missiles, could transform an already brutal civil war into an East-West proxy fight. Israel, meanwhile, threatened to strike such air defense missiles systems if delivered to Syria, portraying them as a threat to the Jewish state and raising the risk of regional conflagration.

The possibility of an arms race in Syria overshadowed attempts by the U.S. and Russia to bring representatives of the Assad regime and Syria's political opposition to peace talks at an international conference in Geneva, possibly next month.

The talks, though seen as a long shot, constitute the international community's only plan for ending the conflict that began more than two years ago and has killed more than 70,000 people.

In Syria, the commander of the main Western-backed umbrella group of rebel brigades told The Associated Press he urgently needs Western anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles to prevent further regime gains on the battlefield. The rebels' weapons are no match for the Syrian regime's modern tanks and warplanes, he said.

"We are very disappointed," Gen. Salim Idris, military chief of the Free Syrian Army, said of the European Union's apparent decision not to send weapons, if at all, until after the Geneva conference. "We don't have any patience (any) more."

In any case, Europe might think twice about sending such weapons into a chaotic war zone where they could quickly be seized by Islamic militant rebels, some of whom have pledged allegiance to the al-Qaida terror network.

Britain, which along with France had pushed for ending the EU arms embargo, wants to use the threat of arming the rebels as leverage to ensure that Assad negotiates in good faith.

Syria's fractured opposition, which has not yet committed to the Geneva talks, could also be lured to the table if attendance is linked to receiving weapons in the event that talks fail. Opposition leaders have said they will only participate in talks if Assad's departure from power tops the agenda, a demand Assad and his Russian backers have rejected.

British Foreign Secretary William Hague said peace talks are a priority and that "as we work for the Geneva conference, we are not taking any decision to send arms to anyone."

However, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned that recent actions by the West "willingly or unwillingly are undermining the idea of the conference." He denounced the lifting of the EU arms embargo as an "illegitimate decision," saying that supplying weapons to non-governmental groups "goes against all norms of international law."

At the same time, Lavrov's deputy affirmed Tuesday that Russia won't abandon plans to send long-range S-300 air defense missile systems to Syria, despite strong Western and Israeli criticism.

WORLD BRIEFS

Gunfire at Caracas strip club hurts 2 US officials

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—Two officials from the U.S. Embassy suffered gunshot wounds early Tuesday during an altercation at a strip club in Venezuela's crime-ridden capital, police and U.S. State Department officials said. Their injuries were not considered life-threatening. The circumstances of the shooting were unclear, with conflicting reports over whether it happened inside or outside the Antonella 2012 nightclub. Police said the two U.S. officials were shot following a brawl inside the club, which is in the basement of a shopping center in the upper-middle-class Chacao neighborhood. A woman who works at the club said the two men got into a fight with each other.

20 Tunisians convicted of attacking US Embassy

TUNIS, Tunisia (AP)—The lawyer for the 20 Tunisians accused of attacking the U.S. Embassy in Tunis says they have been convicted and given two-year suspended sentences. On Sept. 14, a mob of several thousand attacked the embassy in response to an American-made film considered insulting to Islam, and four demonstrators died. Some 73 people were arrested, but most were released for lack of evidence and only 20 went on trial. They were convicted Tuesday night, says defense lawyer Anwar Oued-Ali. He says only nine of them are in custody. After the attack, the government took a tougher stance with religious hardliners known as Salafis.

Environment

ForestEthics group: 'Green' seal not worth paper it's printed on

By ERIKA BOLSTAD
MCCLATCHY WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON—Take a look at the notepad on your desk, your ATM receipt or the package of disposable plates you bought for your Memorial Day barbecue. Many paper products are labeled as being sourced from sustainable forests, and many consumers make buying decisions based on those labels.

But are the labels trustworthy? An environmental group, ForestEthics, plans to file a complaint Wednesday with the Federal Trade Commission that says one of the largest organizations that certify forestry practices misleads consumers about the sources of the products that carry its seal of approval.

The complaint argues that the Sustainable Forestry Initiative's claim that it's an independent, nonprofit public charity is deceptive and misleading because it's "substantially governed and financed by the timber industry."

ForestEthics accuses the Washington, D.C.-based Sustainable Forestry Initiative of violating the FTC's Green Guides for environmental marketing claims, which were revamped in October. The complaint claims that the Sustainable Forestry Initiative misleads well-intentioned companies and consumers into thinking they're making environmentally sound choices about wood and paper products, said Todd Paglia, the executive director of ForestEthics, based in Bellingham, Wash. It's a fake eco label, Paglia said.

"We're asking the FTC to apply its Green Guides, which speak clearly to an entity like SFI," Paglia said. "Which would mean they either need to disclose in very clear and unmistakable terms that they are funded by the logging industry and that they are not independent. On their website, and on all their materials. And on their label."

Many consumers make purchasing decisions based on such seals, making them a valuable designation for marketers. Advertising Age estimated last year that sales of environmentally friendly products in the United States exceeded $40 billion last year.

ForestEthics has worked to discourage large companies that make major wood and paper purchases from using the Sustainable Forestry Initiative designation or to consider it only at a minimum level in purchasing decisions. Such companies include Office Depot, Southwest Airlines, Cricket Communications and Hewlett-Packard.

Often companies switch to a designation by a separate organization, the Forest Stewardship Council. ForestEthics has pushed both organizations to be more accountable, but it says the Forest Stewardship Council is more independent. The Forest Stewardship Council now certifies all of Hewlett-Packard's HP Everyday paper products in the Americas, the company said last month in announcing the change.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative didn't respond to a request for comment for this story. The organization said earlier this month in response to a ForestEthics publicity blitz that it was "committed to complying with the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's Green Guides and the guidelines on environmental labeling and advertising issued by the Fair Business Practices Branch of Industry Canada's Competition Bureau."

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative and ForestEthics have clashed before, and in April the Sustainable Forestry Initiative sent ForestEthics a cease-and-desist letter threatening a lawsuit. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative has a section of its website devoted to disputing the ForestEthics claims, including the environmental group's assertion that companies are dropping the SFI label.

"We invite ForestEthics to stop its campaign of misleading attacks and to devote its resources to working with SFI and millions of stakeholders across North America who are improving conditions in our forests day in and day out," Sustainable Forestry Initiative said in a statement on its website.

A spokesman for the Forest Stewardship Council said the organization was unaware of the ForestEthics FTC complaint, and declined to comment Tuesday.

Are great white sharks endangered?

By LOUIS SAHAGUN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

It's a mystery of the sea: How many great white sharks are prowling near California's surf lines?

Some scientists say the population is large and healthy. Others say it is alarmingly small. No one has ever known for certain, but the question has become crucial this year.

State and federal authorities are weighing a request to classify the fish scientists know as Carcharodon carcharias as an endangered species worth preserving at all costs, a step that could, among other things, wipe out what's left of a gill net fishing industry that inadvertently snares great whites.

"This is a tough one—we are keenly aware that the scientific community is polarized on this issue," said Adrianna Shea, deputy chief of the California Department of Fish and Game Commission.

Great white sharks are apex predators, meaning they feed at the top of the food chain and are naturally low in abundance.

Few creatures possess the fearsome mystique of the white shark, which can reach 21 feet, weigh 31/2 tons and hunts near surf lines shared by surfers, scuba divers and swimmers.

The National Marine Fisheries Service and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife have been researching the health of the great white population since last year, when the environmental groups Oceana, Shark Stewards and the Center for Biological Diversity filed petitions calling for endangered species protection.

The groups were reacting to the first—and only—census of great whites ever attempted. Conducted by UC Davis and Stanford University researchers and published in the journal Biology Letters in 2011, the census estimated that only 219 adult and sub-adult great whites lived off the Central California coast, and perhaps again that many in the entire northeastern Pacific Ocean, including Southern California.

Other shark experts claim the actual population is several times larger, a legacy of state and federal laws curbing pollution, banning near-shore gill netting, protecting sharks and halting the slaughter of marine mammals they prey on.

The authors of the census study declined to comment on the merits of the petitions. However, one of the them, Sal Jorgensen, who is now a research scientist at the Monterey Bay Aquarium in Monterey, said, "I don't think there is an imminent threat.

The money being spent by the government to evaluate this issue would be better spent trying to evaluate this question: Is the number of white sharks rising or falling?"

The census was conducted from 2006 to 2008 on sharks that gather around Tomales Point, near Bodega Bay, and the Farallon Islands off the San Francisco coast from late July until late January.

The researchers assumed the population is closed during the study period, meaning no sharks leave or join the group, and that it returns to the area in precise annual homecomings, making reliable census estimates possible.

The researchers lured great whites close to their boat by slowly pulling a fake seal. They identified 131 individual sharks by the distinctive patterns of nicks, notches and scars on the trailing edge of their dorsal fins and then used mathematical models to calculate the likely population.

US environmentalist Bill McKibben wins Sophie Prize

OSLO, Norway (AP)—American environmentalist Bill McKibben has won the $100,000 Sophie Prize for being a mobilizing force in the fight against global warming.

The award committee commended McKibben for "building a global, social movement, fighting to preserve a sustainable planet."

McKibben, born in 1960, has written widely about the impact of global warming. In 2008, he founded 350.org, an international movement aimed at solving the climate crisis with representatives in some 190 countries.

The annual Sophie Prize was created in 1997 to reward efforts for a sustainable future. The winner is selected by a Norwegian cultural committee, which said Tuesday that the award ceremony will be held in October in Oslo.

DO YOUR PART

By TERRI BENNETT
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Slash your summer utility bills

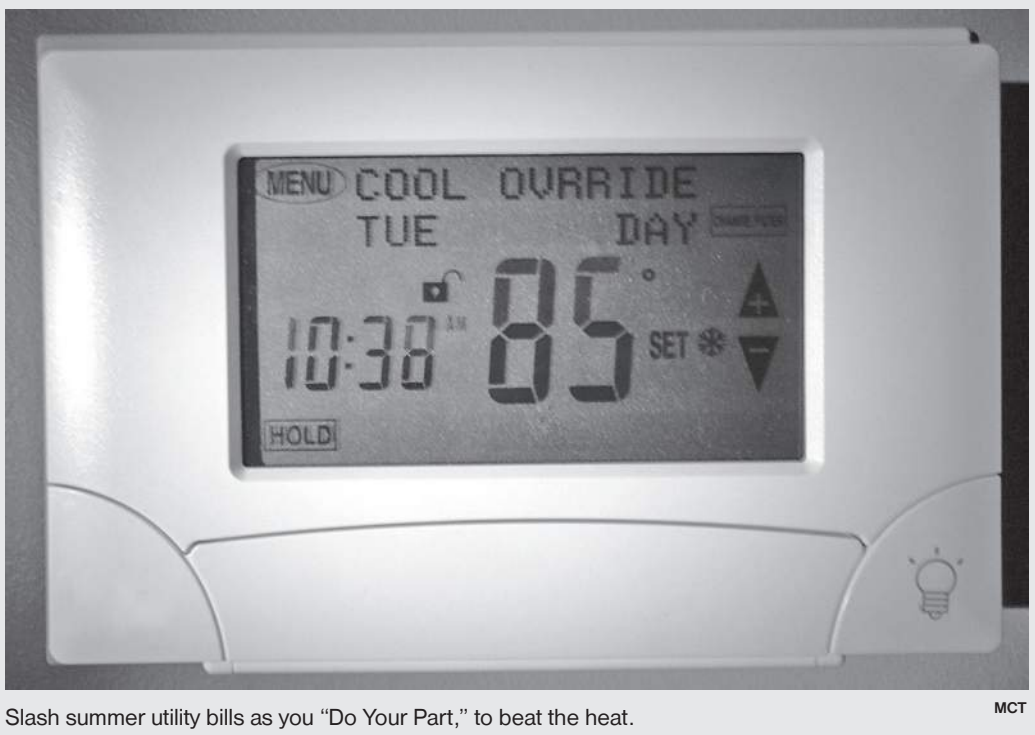
It's getting downright hot outside these days. Don't despair over rising utility bills as you try to keep cool inside your home. Here are my top five ways to slash summer utility bills as you Do Your Part to beat the heat.

1) MAKE YOUR THERMOSTAT WORK FOR YOU

First, program your thermostat to work around your family's summer schedule—set it a few degrees higher when no one is home, so you're not cooling an empty house. Contrary to popular belief, your cooling system doesn't struggle to make up the difference. Or install and program a programmable thermostat so you won't worry about changing the thermostat every time you leave your home.

2) DON'T FORGET THE FAN

A fan is another effective way to make it feel cooler in your home. One ceiling fan alone can make a room feel as much as seven degrees cooler. If you raise your thermostat by two degrees and use a ceiling fan, you can lower cooling costs by up to 14 percent. The fan's blades should spin counter-clockwise during the hotter months, generating a stronger breeze directly under the fan. Of course, don't waste energy and turn the fan off when you leave the room. In humid climates, using a dehumidifier will also make it feel cooler by lowering the relative humidity inside your home.



Slash summer utility bills as you "Do Your Part," to beat the heat. MCT

3) MAKE YOUR CURRENT WINDOWS MORE EFFICIENT

Closing the blinds and curtains during the day can also help you keep cool. When you block the sunlight you can reduce the heat coming into your home by as much as 40 percent. To maximize your benefit, make sure the side of the curtain facing the window is white and sun reflecting. You can also choose curtains with a thermal lining for additional insulation.

4) KEEP COOL IN THE KITCHEN

Your kitchen is another big source of heat inside your home. Avoid running your appliances such as the dishwasher (or clothes dryer) during the day. Instead, run it at night and only when it is fully loaded. Instead of heating up the oven, fire-up the grill to keep it cool inside. Using the microwave is another way to whip up those side dishes without creating more heat in the kitchen.

5) TREES MAKE A BIG IMPACT

Finally, plant a tree (or two) near the southwest corner of your home. Choose a deciduous tree that will shade your home in the summer and shed its leaves in the fall to allow in warm winter sunlight. Plan for the tree to grow there for decades so don't plant it too close to your home. Find out the approximate full size of the canopy and plant it accordingly.

Combined, these tips can dramatically reduce the amount of energy you use to keep your home cool. And you'll hardly break a sweat as you Do Your Part to make them work for you.

Terri Bennett is a national speaker, eco-expert, and author of Do Your Part: A practical guide for everyday green living available at DoYourPart.com. Send questions or speaker requests to terri@doyourpart.com.

Life & Style

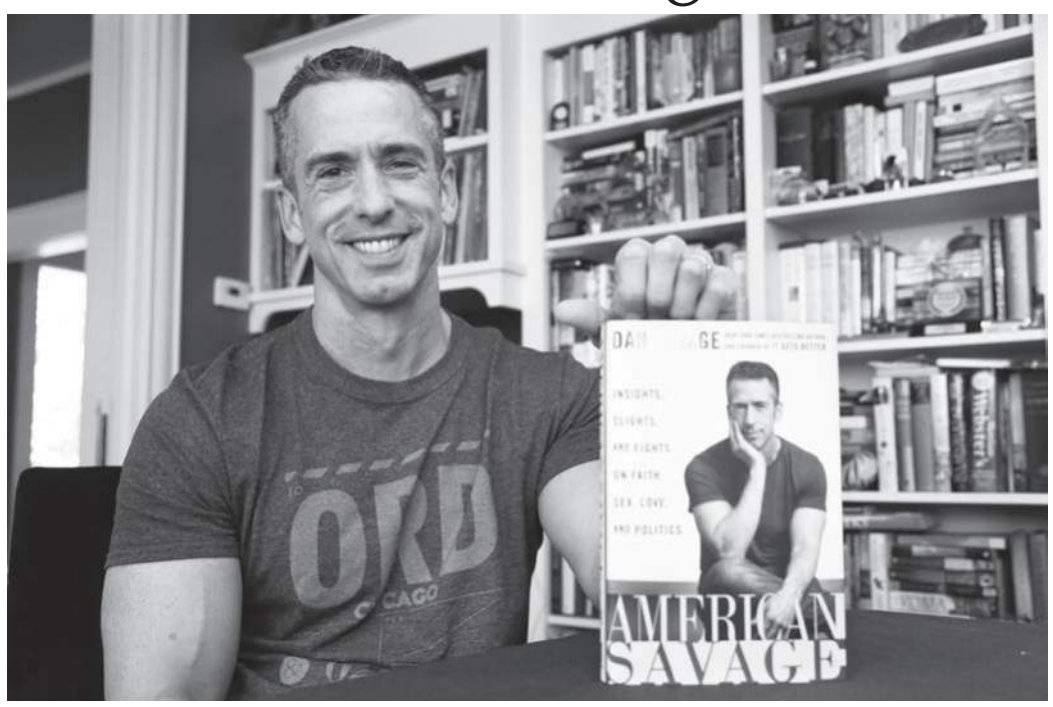
Sex-advice ace Dan Savage on the loose in new book

NEW YORK (AP)—It's been quite a run for Dan Savage, what with all the podcasting and tweeting and in-your-face defending of marriage equality.

Between speaking gigs, radio and TV appearances and the syndicated sex-advice column he writes from a desk that belonged to Ann Landers, Savage managed another book, "American Savage," out this week from Dutton.

Savage, 48, looks back on his mom, who died in 2008, takes us into his rationale for why cheating may just save your marriage and offers a glimpse of life at home with husband Terry Miller and their 15-year-old son.

He says he wanted to write the book in part because "you know, I'm kind of gay and kind of prominent and I've been slugging away at the marriage equality issue for a long time." But the book is about more than that. Savage talked to the AP about upsetting social conservatives, trashing the Bible and being among the first same-sex couples to legally marry in Washington state.



AP

In this photo taken on May 22, 2013, author Dan Savage holds his new book, "American Savage," as he sits in his home in Seattle. Savage's latest book, "American Savage," was released on Tuesday, May 28.

AP: How has becoming a father and watching your child grow changed you as a sex-advice columnist?

Savage: It has changed me a little bit. I've been getting letters from teenagers who are 14, 15 and 16 years old, and sexually active, and with questions or problems, and I would give them advice, and now when I get a letter from a 15-year-old I look at my son, who's 15, and I think, 'You're too young to be reading my column, you're too young to be in this situation.'

It's that getting older and becoming a parent and sort of drifting into that hypocrisy and the great forgetting of what being 15 is like, because I was sexually active at 15 and I'm fine, but when it comes to your own kid, you look at your own kid and go, 'No, no you have to wait at least 10 more years.' There's a surprising conservatism that parenting can unearth in your soul.

AP: Do you have any regrets about your speech last year at the high school journalism conference in which you said there was bull--- in the Bible and called a walkout by a small number of participants "a pansy-assed move?"

Savage: Yeah, I do. When you screw up you want to apologize and I did apologize for 'pansy-assed.' That was name-calling and that was hypocritical of me. I didn't apologize for 'bull----' in the Bible because there is, indeed, bull---- in the Bible. ... I don't pull punches when it comes to religion and I cannot avoid religion talking about the abuse of (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) kids because so much has a religious motivation or rationalization.

AP: How does your late mother, who was a lay minister, influence your work?

Savage: My mother was really compassionate. There are three women I credit for sort of stumbling onto this gig and it being the right gig for me, and that was always Ann Landers, Xavier Hollander, who wrote the 'Happy Hooker' column in Penthouse magazine, and my mother.

My mom was Dr. Phil for the neighborhood. I was a weird sort of sensitive mama's boy and I would be in the kitchen, you know, hanging out doing nothing, sitting under the table while my mother sat there and hashed out problems with neighbor ladies and gave them advice. It was really listening to my mother give advice, and talk things out and listen to people and pick up on what they wanted, what they didn't want. My mother used to say, 'That's the way the world works. You make a living doing what I did as a woman for free.'

AP: Amid the backlash from religious conservatives over your speech to the high school journalism students, you invited Brian Brown of the National Organization for Marriage for dinner and a tense dinner-table debate, which has been viewed more than 200,000 times on YouTube. How was it off-camera, behind the scenes?

Savage: I didn't run it by Terry, that I was going to invite a very prominent anti-gay bigot into our house for dinner, so I had to come home and say, 'Oh honey, guess who's coming to dinner?' That did not go over well. The debate itself was really tense. I think I over-prepared. It felt like all the pressure of Christmas and then none of the delight. You know, all the preparation for a big Christmas dinner and instead of it being Santa Claus and chocolates and presents showing up it's a bigot.

AP: How does your advice on cheating differ from your predecessors' advice on cheating in a committed, monogamous relationship?

Savage: The standard position is that cheating is always wrong, and that we as sex-advice professionals are never allowed to tell anyone that cheating is OK, or the right thing to do. And in reality, there are times when cheating is the right thing to do, when cheating is the lesser of two evils.

I don't think people should violate commitments. I don't think serial adulterers get a pass. I don't think that someone should make a commitment that they can't keep. But knowing what we know about infidelity—something like 60 percent of all men in long-term relationships and 40 percent of all women cheat at some point—our default position should not be cheating must always lead to divorce. ...

I look at a marriage and I see a life and a shared history. I see children. I see shared property. I see shared goals. I see real love and longevity, and then there's an infidelity. ... There are cases where women and sometimes men later in life are no longer interested in sex at all and cannot fake it and it's emotionally scarring and traumatizing to fake it and go through the motions. What is the solution, divorce? Or some allowance, some accommodation, the turning of a blind eye. There's a lot of marriages like that, where late in life it's just not about sex anymore.

I'm a conservative. That's the irony. I think people should be the Clintons, not the Sanfords. I think people should be Anthony Weiner and his wife and not to default to divorce.

Justin Bieber investigated for reckless driving

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles County Sheriff's detectives are investigating Justin Bieber for reckless driving after witnesses—including former NFL star Keyshawn Johnson—complained about the pop-star's alleged freeway speeds in their gated community in north Los Angeles County.

Bieber

At about 8 p.m. Monday, Bieber allegedly drove his white Ferrari at freeway speeds in what is a 25 mph zone, Sheriff's spokesman Steve Whitmore said.

Johnson was outside with his 3-year-old daughter who was preparing to get into a small electric car when Bieber zoomed by. Johnson was upset and got into his Prius, following Bieber to his nearby home. As the garage door was closing, Johnson put out his arm and stopped it, telling Bieber he wanted to talk about his reckless driving.

Whitmore said Bieber scurried into his home without speaking.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department received two calls and responded to the location. When they tried to talk to Bieber, however, they were also turned away.

"His security detail said he declined to talk to us based on the advice of counsel," Whitmore said.

Deputies interviewed two witnesses, including Johnson, and wrote up their report. They handed that off to detectives who are continuing to investigate the incident.

"Their eyewitness testimony to our deputies was definitive—not only the speed, not only the vehicle, but Mr. Bieber was sitting and driving in the driver's side seat," Whitmore said.

Deputies plan to send a reckless driving report to the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office to consider filing misdemeanor charges in the next week or two.

Bieber's publicist did not immediately return a call for comment. Johnson declined to comment via ESPN, where he now works as a TV commentator.

Prosecutors are also looking at whether to charge Bieber for battery in a separate incident involving a neighbor, who complained the pop-star attacked and threatened him.

"We take this very seriously and if this actually did occur, which it appears that it did, it is unacceptable behavior from anybody, anywhere, anytime," Whitmore said.

In Loving Memory
of our beloved
Wife and Mother

Ermina Y. Mikel
Lovingly known as "Emy"

Born on December 4, 1957, and called
to eternal rest on May 24, 2013

Predeceased by:
Parents: Yatamag & Abena
Parents in Law: Mikel & Nianis Asangara
Reared Son: Donald Suwell

Survived by:
Husband: Emmanuel J. Mikel
Children: Emanuel Atinisom Jr. & Emrose Made, Joshua Y. Mikel, Jennifer A. Dela Cruz, Ludale A. Camacho, Jeffrey A. Dela Cruz
Grandchild: Maralou Cudiamat
Nieces & Nephews: Doreen A. Kilmete, Brandon L. Oped, Alice & Nick Dela Cruz, Nutsy & Frank Tagabuel, Lorenzo A. Niro, Late & Nieves Atinisom, Atarino Jinny& Neoni, Norentine & Wilson Atinisom, Lingko & Alex Laniyo
God Sisters & God Brothers: Banjong Demapan, Tommy Demapan Pablo,Eddie Tudela
God Child: Frankie Boy

"My love for you will never leave and my covenant of peace with you will never be shaken."

Isaiah 54:10

She will also be missed by numerous Friends and Family

Nightly rosary is being held at the Mikel Residence in Kagman II at 7:30 p.m.

On Saturday June 1, 2013, Memorial Service will be held at Life in the Sun Christian Fellowship in Gualo Rai at 9:00 AM. Immediately followed by burial at the Tanapag Cemetery.

Thank You for your prayers

The Family

Sheryl Crow undergoes a country conversion

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—For a couple of months now, Sheryl Crow has been loading her two young boys aboard a bus and taking off on a tour of country music radio stations around the country.

She's visiting with DJs and programming directors, playing a few songs live, then hopping back on the bus to do it again a few hours down the road. It reminds her, fittingly, of a scene from "Coal Miner's Daughter," the life story of Loretta Lynn.

"It really is like the scene where Doo zips up Loretta's dress and she runs in with her new acetate, her 45, and says, `Here's my new record,' and she plays something on air, shakes a few hands and leaves," Crow said. "It really is a throwback to that and it's the most organic thing I've done in years."

The image is fitting. It was Lynn's handwritten note asking Crow to appear with the honky-tonk queen on the 2010 Country Music Association Awards that started this journey toward the genre for the 51-year-old singer-songwriter. She has a single, "Easy," at country radio and will release her first country-oriented album, "Feels Like Home," on Sept. 10.

Crow recently spoke with The Associated Press about her new album, life in Nashville and continued questions about her former relationship with Lance Armstrong.

When Crow finished that performance with Lynn and Miranda Lambert, Brad Paisley met her backstage and beseeched her to come home to the format she really belonged in. She'd had some success at country in the past, teaming with Kid Rock on "Picture" in 2002. The song was a modest hit and even scored them a vocal event of the year nomination at the 2003 Country Music Association Awards.

Crow thought about it and Paisley's message took hold. But it meant she would have to change things up and embrace Nashville's country music culture. Eventually, he helped kick start the new record, suggested producer Justin Niebank and introduced her to songwriter Chris Dubois, who served as a co-writer and informal song editor. She changed her songwriting tack, looking to match the more visceral, story-telling style of the genre.

And no one succeeds in country music without courting radio—thus the bus. Most of country music's biggest stars started that way and Crow—20 years after releasing her first album, the five times platinum "Tuesday Night Music Club"—didn't see herself as exempt, no matter how many millions of albums she's already sold.

The first day of radio tour she hit larger markets like Knoxville and Chattanooga in Tennessee, Atlanta, Orlando, Fla., and some privately owned stations in smaller towns, too. One day, three states. Welcome to country.

"I say that it's fun, but it's the hardest thing I've ever done," Crow said. "Because sitting on the bus and only getting the gratification of only playing like a couple of songs, and then driving for two more hours and then getting to play a couple more songs. It's really hard, but it's great, you know? ... I've felt really embraced."

The aptly titled "Feels Like Home" serves as a figurative mile marker in her personal life as well. The title could easily refer to her new life in Nashville, where she moved seven years ago after beating breast cancer. She's since adopted two young sons, Levi and Wyatt, and settled into the creative community. Her kids go to school with the kids of other artists—she recently held a fundraiser for a local school—and they all see each other at church.

AP

This July 19, 2010 file photo shows singer Sheryl Crow posing for a portrait in New York. Crow's latest release, "Feels Like Home," will be released on Sept. 10.

"It's really idyllic," she said. "And the other great thing about it is I can get off the airplane and there's no paparazzi."

One fly in that ointment, however, has been persistent questions about her past relationship with ex-fiance Armstrong and what she may have known during her relationship with the disgraced cyclist who recently admitted to doping. She made brief remarks during an "Entertainment Tonight" interview at the time of the admission saying "the truth will set you free," but has not addressed it since—and says she won't.

"The only thing I would say about Lance is that his story is completely his own and has nothing to do with my life, and so I don't speak about it," Crow said. "I was asked a question on a TV show once, which caught me off-guard, and I feel like I kind of answered it, and that's all I can say about it. It really has zero relevance, and I'm sorry that people still want to attach me to that, but it holds no relevance to my life."

These days her life is more about blending in, something she can do in Nashville. Crow, who appears on "The Voice" on Tuesday night, embraced the Music City lifestyle in the studio, too. Each song of her eighth album's 12 tracks was co-written with another songwriter, a first. She brought in old songwriting friend Jeff Trott, but she also worked with Nashville songwriters and even enlisted Paisley to co-write a song, "Waterproof Mascara."

"I made Brad Paisley write a chick song about being a single mom," she said excitedly.

Niebank, a Grammy-winning producer and engineer, said Crow had the framework for the songs in place and despite the new direction displayed the self-assuredness that led her to pop stardom and beyond at the height of her career.

"I know it seems odd, but when I grew up the greatest musician in the room should be the person with their name on the album," Niebank said. "They should be the best person in the room by a mile. And nowadays on a lot of records they're not the best person in the room. They have to be technically manipulated and everything, but there's a lot more celebrity and PR manipulation to make them an artist. She's the exact opposite of that. She actually runs the session. That's how great musicians work."

T Bone Burnett, the "Nashville" musical director who recently worked with Crow on the Stephen King-John Mellencamp project "Ghost Brothers of Darkland County," thinks her shift of focus is a natural one.

"Well, she's from Missouri—that's just about as country as you can get," Burnett joked. "So, I think she fits great, especially with what's going on now in country music. At this point, she's kind of a traditionalist in the country world."

Back in Nashville, Crow talked about the new album as she drove to the gym for a gymnastics class with her 3-year-old. She wasn't worried about her makeup or prying eyes and can go to the grocery store any time she wants.

"It wasn't until I moved here that I realized what an amazing community it is," she said. "It's the thing I've been missing my whole career, the feeling of being able to sit around with a guitar and have people know each other's songs and know songs from people who've influenced all of us. When I moved here pretty early on Vince Gill started calling me to do guitar pulls, and I thought, gosh, this is just like heaven on earth down here."

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EPIC [CC] (PG) (405 PM)

EPIC 3D [CC] (PG) (105 PM) 705 PM

FAST & FURIOUS 6 [CC] (PG-13) (125 PM 425 PM) 725 PM

HANGOVER 3, THE [CC] (R) (130 PM 430 PM) 730 PM

STAR TREK: INTO DARKNESS [CC] (PG-13) (120 PM 420 PM) 720 PM

STAR TREK: INTO DARKNESS 3D [CC] (PG-13) (110 PM 410 PM) 710 PM

THE GREAT GATSBY [CC] (PG-13) (115 PM 415 PM) 715 PM

IRON MAN 3 [CC] (PG-13) (400 PM)

IRON MAN 3 3D [CC] (PG-13) (100 PM) 700 PM

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Chinese artist Weiwei's mother at Venice opening

VENICE, Italy (AP)—When a mother views scenes of her son's imprisonment, sometimes no words are needed. Tears will do.

Chinese artist Ai Weiwei was prevented by Chinese authorities from traveling to Venice for the opening of two new works of his on the sidelines of the Biennale contemporary art show, so his mother came in his stead.

Weiwei's elderly mother, Gao Yng, on Tuesday viewed for the first time a series of dioramas depicting six episodes of intense pressure during her son's 81 days in detention in 2011.

Gao walked quietly through the exhibit, peering through openings in the 1.5-meter (4 1/2-foot) high boxes inside which Weiwei reconstructed in great detail scenes of his captivity. His mother did not speak to journalists who documented the moment, but she was moved to tears as she left the exhibit in the church of Sant'Antonin.

The two events by Weiwei, both site-specific to the Venice spaces in which they were displayed, are emotionally linked.

Weiwei constructed the piece "Straight" to be installed in a former convent on Giudecca island in the Venetian lagoon. The piece is made up of 150 tons of steel rebar that was removed from the ruins of Chinese schools that collapsed in the 2008 earthquake in Sichuan province that killed nearly 5,200 children. Many have blamed shoddy construction practices and outright building fraud for the children's quake deaths.

Weiwei and his team spent two years straightening the pieces of steel. He then arranged them lying flat, one on top of another, to create a new topography inside the Le Zitelle complex, a room where orphan girls once sewed.

Another version of the piece—less than half the size of the one in Venice—was presented at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C. last year; this one will tour North America after leaving Venice.

AP

Chinese artist Ai Weiwei's mother Gao Ying looks into one of the six containers part of an installation by her son during a press preview of the 55th edition of the Venice Biennale of Arts in Venice, northern Italy, Tuesday, May 28, 2013.

"He is making something right that was wrong," said Maurizio Bortolotti, who curated the two collateral exhibits. "I think it is very symbolic. Every piece has seen a human and moral distortion."

It was Weiwei's political activism highlighting corruption in the aftermath of the 2008 quake that drew the ire of Chinese authorities and led to his detention in April 2011. That included a project to gather the names of all the children who perished as a sort of memorial, said Greg Hilty, curatorial director of the Lisson Gallery in London that collaborated on the Venice projects and which has long worked with Weiwei.

Bortolotti said the first installation, called S.A.C.R.E.D., has its own iconography similar to of the Stations of the Cross, depicting the suffering of Jesus as he is led to be nailed on the cross.

"There is a sense of self-doubt. Weiwei didn't know if any moment could be the last. He wasn't tortured, but there was a process of trying to break him down psychologically," he said.

For the installation, Weiwei constructed six containers in half-scale, recreating scenes from his detention, each revealing the constant surveillance to which he was subjected.

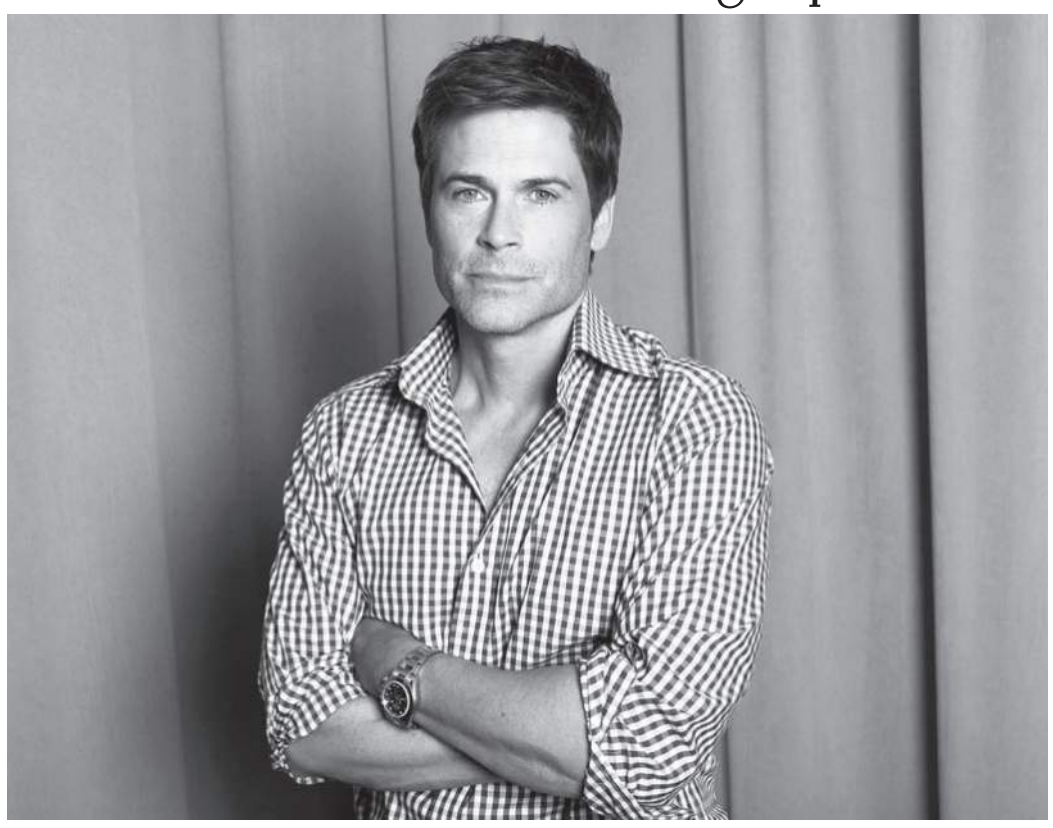
Inside six metal boxes, which on their own are a form of minimalist sculpture, Weiwei created scenes showing himself carrying out the routines of prison life, often with two guards watching. Visitors peer inside through one small window fitted with a fan that he recreated from life, or from openings on the ceiling to provide visual access where none existed.

Rob Lowe cast as JFK in National Geographic film

NEW YORK (AP)—Rob Lowe will portray President John F. Kennedy in a National Geographic film about the former president's 1963 assassination. The National Geographic Channel said Tuesday that filming for "Killing Kennedy" would begin next month in Richmond, Va. The film is expected to air around the 50th anniversary of the shooting later this year and is based on the book by Bill O'Reilly.

National Geographic already had a hit earlier this year with an adaptation of another of the Fox News Channel anchor's books, "Killing Lincoln."

In addition to Lowe, the movie will feature Ginnifer Goodwin as the first lady and Michelle Trachtenberg as Marina Oswald.



This April 25, 2012 file photo shows actor Rob Lowe posing for a portrait in New York. AP

Urban announces new album as he waits on 'Idol'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Keith Urban is no different than the rest of us: He has no idea what's going on with "American Idol."

"I have no official information of anything," the 45-year-old country singer-guitarist said. "I'm pretty much in the same boat as everybody else here with the rumors that have been floating around. I don't know anything more about what's happening next season. It was like this before I signed on ... so it's not unusual for the 'Idol' folks to be in this place of figuring out what they want to do, then they always pull it together."

Urban's got plenty to distract him while he waits. The Australian country music star has set a Sept. 10 release date for his new album, "Fuse," and that means he's got to finish it. Urban thinks he's got a few months of work left to do on the follow-up to 2010's "Get Closer," but leaves on tour in mid-July and hasn't left himself much of a cushion.

Urban

These things usually don't take so long, but Urban is using a new approach with "Fuse." He is branching out from his longtime partnership with producer Dann Huff. While Huff is still onboard on a handful of songs, Urban signed up Jay Joyce, known best in country music for his work with Eric Church and Little Big Town, and Taylor Swift collaborator Nathan Chapman. He's also enlisted rocker Butch Walker.

Rick Springfield to publish debut novel in 2014

NEW YORK (AP)—Creative writing was Rick Springfield's first love, and he's returning to it with his debut novel.

Springfield

A Tuesday news release says the musician-actor will release "Magnificent Vibration" in May 2014 on the Simon & Schuster imprint Touchstone.

Springfield is best known as the multi-platinum "Jessie's Girl" singer and "General Hospital" star, but his memoir "Late, Late at Night" was a surprise New York Times best-seller. He said in the statement the experience "reminded me how much I love the craft."

Springfield's novel is about a tough-times protagonist who receives a 1-800 phone connection with God through a self-help book. The book comes during a busy period for the musician. He recently participated in Dave Grohl's "Sound City" documentary and album and appeared on "Californication" and "Hawaii Five-O."

'Iron Man 3' star Hall heads to Broadway

NEW YORK (AP)—Rebecca Hall, who plays a brilliant biologist in "Iron Man 3," will soon get to play a murderer onstage.

The Roundabout Theatre Company said Tuesday that Hall will star on Broadway in the first revival of "Machinal" since it made its debut 85 years ago.

Previews begin Dec. 20 at the American Airlines Theatre and opening night is Jan. 16. Sophie Treadwell's play is inspired by the 1927 murder trial of Ruth Brown Snyder, who was executed after helping her lover kill her husband.

Hall

When it debuted on Broadway in 1928, the role of the lover was played by the then-unknown Clark Gable.

Hall, an English actress who earned a Golden Globe nomination for "Vicky Cristina Barcelona," also appeared in Ben Affleck's "The Town" and on TV in "Parade's End."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

New buyers for cards to benefit cancer charity

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—A 7-year-old cancer patient who had a trading card issued in his honor after he ran roughshod over the Nebraska Cornhuskers has found new buyers for cards set aside for his charity. Among those stepping up: actor James Denton, who was on "Desperate Housewives." Video of Jack Hoffman's run during Nebraska's spring football game was an Internet hit. The Upper Deck Co. issued a card for Jack, with signed blow-ups for his foundation to auction off. The winning bidder for the first card declined to pay, saying he hadn't authorized the $6,100 bid. Jack's father, Andy Hoffman, says news coverage prompted three buyers to offer $10,000 each for a signed card. Denton lives in suburban Minneapolis, and the Hoffmans traveled there to meet him Tuesday. They are from Atkinson, Neb.

Title of new Bridget Jones novel revealed

LONDON (AP)—Everyone's favorite literary singleton will return in a new novel entitled "Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy." Publishers disclosed the title of Helen Fielding's forthcoming book on Tuesday. It continues the comic saga of diary-writing Bridget's romantic and professional adventures. The character, introduced to readers in two 1990s' novels, now must cope with an age of text messaging and social media. Fielding said Bridget is older now and her "life has moved on. But, the question is, just how much?" The previous books, "Bridget Jones's Diary" and "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason," sold 15 million copies between them and were adapted into movies starring Renee Zellweger. The new book will be published Oct. 10 in Britain by Jonathan Cape, and Oct. 15 in the U.S. by Alfred A. Knopf.

Winfrey calls Ripa and Strahan talk-show royalty

NEW YORK (AP)—Oprah Winfrey doesn't have a daily talk show anymore. But two years after abdicating her throne, the former talk-show queen is clear who she thinks now wear the crowns: Kelly Ripa and Michael Strahan. Winfrey declared the co-hosts "the reigning king and queen" during a surprise appearance on Tuesday's "Live with Kelly and Michael." Winfrey, who now runs the OWN cable network, where she appears on-camera on a less-frequent basis, insisted she doesn't miss the daily talk-show grind. She was brought on "Live," unannounced, by guest Tyler Perry. He is now producing shows for her network. Perry's new drama, "The Haves and the Have Nots," was scheduled to premiere Tuesday night. His new comedy, "Love Thy Neighbor," debuts Wednesday.

Friend keeping confidences feels he's about to crack

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I am friendly with a married couple. The husband, "Grant," is my best friend and we talk about everything. His wife, "Sharon," and I are equally close. Their wedding date was last summer.

I have known for a while that Grant didn't want to get married. He did it to please everyone around him. Sharon, however, was elated. He hoped that after the wedding his feelings would change. Now they have been married for nine months Grant tells me he can't continue on, that he is unhappy and no longer wants to be married.

I have begged and pleaded with him to level with Sharon. He keeps making excuses about why he hasn't told her yet. He says he'll do it—but each day he moves the discussion further and further back. When I talk with her, she tells me she has the feeling he doesn't want to be married anymore.

Please help. This is stressing me out. I want to let Grant tell her, but I feel I should say something because he hasn't. At the same time, I don't want to have anyone mad at me. What should I do?

CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE

DEAR CAUGHT: Step back and keep your mouth shut. You are in a no-win situation.

It is Grant's job to find the courage to tell his wife he made a mistake by marrying her. While it may be painful for her to hear, it probably won't come as a shock, from what she's telling you.

You help neither of them by letting them discuss their marital problems with you instead of with each other. So do them both a favor and remove yourself from the middle.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: When I was 15, I was diagnosed with bi-polar disorder, severe anxiety and social phobia. I am now 20 and have been on countless medications and tried different forms of therapy. I wish for nothing more than to be a fully functioning adult, but I am exhausted from trying my hardest to feel better internally only to find myself where I started.

What's your best advice for young adults dealing with crippling mental illness? How can we live our lives without fear of being rejected or shunned for our illness?

FRUSTRATED IN WASHINGTON

DEAR FRUSTRATED: There is still ignorance, stigma and fear about mental illness mostly because it is misunderstood. However, 50 percent of adults will have a diagnosable mental illness at some time in their lives—including the ones you have.

I discussed your letter with Dr. David Baron, psychiatrist in chief at the University of Southern California hospital. He suggested that I stress to you the importance of finding a mental health professional you can trust and confide in, and have another thorough evaluation done.

In recent years newer drugs and therapies are being used which may help you, so you shouldn't give up. In a case like yours, a combination of medication and talk therapy can be helpful.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 7-year-old boy in the second grade. There is a girl named "Kate" in my class and she wants to marry me. She sits next to me and she is really annoying. What should I do?

NOT READY TO SETTLE DOWN

DEAR NOT READY: Start running. And if she appeals to you when you're about 14, slow down.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

TODAY FOR SHOW AND TELL, I'VE BROUGHT IN SOME FLASH CARDS I MADE.
EACH CARD HAS A LETTER FOLLOWED BY SEVERAL DASHES. WHEN I SHOW THE CARD, YOU YELL THE VULGAR, OBSCENE OR BLASPHEMOUS WORD THEY STAND FOR! ... READY?
SHE'S SUCH A HYPOCRITE ABOUT BUILDING VOCABULARY.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

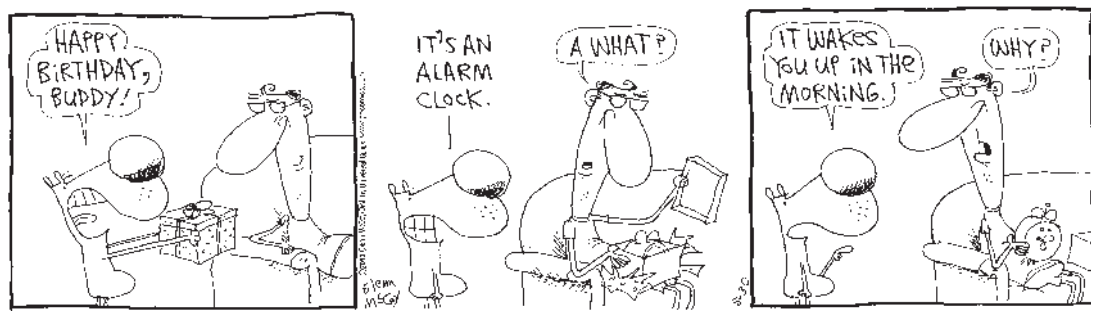
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

YOU GUYS LIKE GODZILLA? I HAVE THE WHOLE COLLECTION ON BLU-RAY!
DAD, WE'RE KIND OF TIRED.
TIRED? IT'S ONLY 11:00! WHAT KIND OF SLEEPOVER IS THIS??
WEAK!
GASP!
WE ARE NOT!!
WEAK WEAK-OS.
WELL, I NEVER.
WHEN I FINALLY DO CREATE A GODZILLA MONSTER HE'S GOING FOR YOU FIRST.
5-30

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

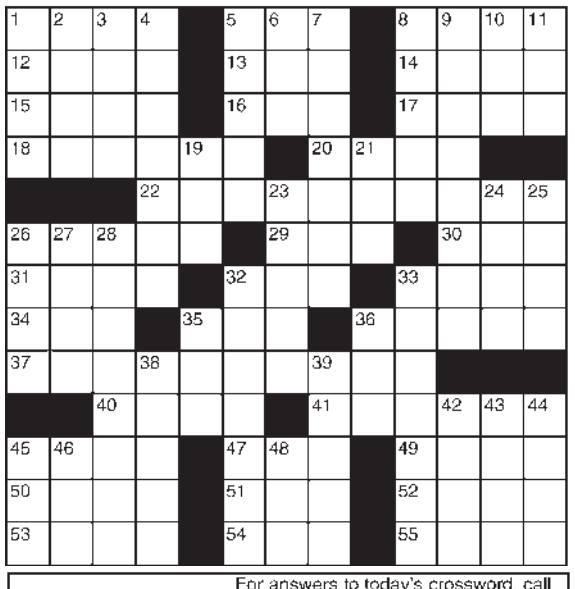
By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 — and call
5 Promptly
8 Despot
12 Verve
13 Rd.
14 Regulation
15 Not yet final, in law
16 — -relief
17 Blind as —
18 Body art
20 Pack down
22 Half a fluid ounce
26 Short
29 Swiss canton
30 Tokyo, once
31 Bergman, in "Casablanca"
32 Action star Diesel
33 One
34 Mel of Coopers-town
35 Programmer's woe
36 Foolish
37 Skiers' carriages
40 Summertime pest
41 Starry
45 Honeycomb compartment
47 Web address
49 Wander
50 Met melody
51 Dos' neighbors
52 Yemeni port
53 Helen's home
54 Previous night
55 Saucy

DOWN
1 Crooked
2 Director Kazan
3 Group of actors
4 Made a sweater, maybe
5 Biz big shot
6 Eggs
7 Oater
8 Chaplin persona
9 Court summons
10 — carte
11 Pensioned (Abbr.)
19 Lummox
21 "— was saying ..."
23 Playwright Pirandello
24 Valhalla VIP
25 Memo
26 United nations
27 Naomi's daughter-in-law
28 Incised printing method
32 Predatory sort
33 Remove a seat belt
35 Underwear with underwire
36 "Monty Python" opener
38 Dental filling
39 Untrue
42 Took the bus
43 State with certainty
44 Gave temporarily
45 Garfield or Heathcliff
46 Blunder
48 Gun the engine

Solution time: 25 mins.

Yesterday's answer 5-30



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Clint Bowyer, 34; Cee Lo Green, 39; Idina Menzel, 42; Wynonna Judd, 49

Happy Birthday: Try something new. Look at job prospects in your field and consider how you can use your skills to suit the current economic climate. Your unique vision and way of presenting what you have to offer will attract the attention of someone with future plans who can use what you have to offer. Love is on the rise. Your numbers are 9, 16, 25, 33, 36, 40, 45.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Take the initiative, make the first move and befriend someone. Showing an effort will bring you one step closer to a workable solution and a lifelong connection. Making a couple of physical changes will result in more confidence as well as compliments. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Don't feel limited by what others do or say. Embrace what you want and push until you reach your destination. Someone from your past will have something to offer, but make sure you know what's expected in return before making a commitment. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Make your move and do something worthwhile. Use your charm, knowledge and experience to compete against someone who hasn't been fair or honest with you in the past. You can and will make a difference. Pursue love and romance. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Get out and mingle with people you can discuss ideas with. Sharing and interacting will open doors to new possibilities. A serious attitude coupled with an unusual idea will capture attention. Someone from a different background will contribute sound advice. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Giving back or offering assistance to a cause you believe in will enhance your reputation and popularity. A change in location or the way you think will bring about an interest in trying something unique and different. Share emotional, physical and mental pursuits. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Don't give in to emotional blackmail or someone trying to outmaneuver you at work. Be ready to counter any attack you face with facts and formulas. Preparation is the name of the game. Play to win. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Don't wait for things to come to you. Spring into action and follow your heart and your dreams and wishes. Use your intelligence and sophistication to dazzle whomever you meet along the way, and you will get whatever support you need. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Don't take chances. Financial, legal or medical problems are likely if you don't take precautions. Protect your assets and rely on your intuition to guide you. Change can be good, but only if it is implemented in a timely fashion. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Participate in activities that allow you to show off. Your ability to charm and encourage others will help you make new connections that can be of use to you. Alterations made to the way you live will enhance an important relationship. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Stick to your own ideas and plans. As soon as you let too many people get involved, you will lose control. Leave time to engage in some stress-relieving physical activity. Look after your needs first and be sure to include pampering. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Get out and have some fun. Try something new or experience different cultures. Make some personal alterations that will enhance your appearance as well as your relationship with someone special. Love is on the rise. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Problems at home will escalate if you are excessive or difficult to get along with. Be willing to compromise, but don't let anyone take advantage of you, either. Honesty and integrity will be a must if you want to avoid opposition. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are unique, popular and pioneering. You are positive, outgoing and intelligent.

Birthday Baby: You are intense and have common sense. You are intelligent and flexible.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

					6		9	
		3			8			5
	7			3	4			
						4	5	6
		2				7		
5	4	8						
			7	8			1	
1			3			9		
	3		5					

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/30

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	5	9	6	3	7	2	1	4
6	7	2	8	1	4	5	3	9
3	4	1	2	9	5	6	8	7
5	2	3	4	7	1	9	6	8
9	8	6	5	2	3	7	4	1
7	1	4	9	6	8	3	5	2
2	3	8	1	5	9	4	7	6
1	6	5	7	4	2	8	9	3
4	9	7	3	8	6	1	2	5

Difficulty Level ★★★ 5/29

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE RICHTER SCALE **Solution: 10 letters**

S	M	N	S	S	R	E	T	A	W	A	V	E	S	T
M	A	U	U	E	E	H	S	E	C	R	O	F	T	O
E	S	M	P	Y	G	R	E	L	E	A	S	E	R	N
T	S	B	P	I	L	A	U	B	M	O	V	E	O	S
S	I	E	L	L	G	L	M	S	E	O	A	S	N	I
Y	V	R	I	R	I	E	A	A	A	R	T	E	G	Z
S	E	E	E	G	M	T	P	C	D	E	V	I	C	E
C	S	A	S	E	O	M	U	I	O	A	M	S	O	S
I	T	D	R	O	D	E	A	D	C	L	I	M	T	N
E	R	I	A	L	E	G	M	J	E	U	N	I	H	S
N	E	N	T	O	R	A	T	I	O	M	O	C	A	H
T	N	G	I	G	A	T	R	Q	T	R	R	N	U	A
I	G	S	N	Y	T	O	A	E	K	O	D	A	R	K
S	T	Y	G	R	E	N	E	E	A	F	B	A	S	E
T	H	O	R	C	I	M	H	T	I	R	A	G	O	L

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Amplitude, Area, Base, Damage, Dark, Device, Energy, Epic, Forces, Formula, Geology, Great, Light, Locally, Logarithmic, Major, Massive, Measures, Megaton, Micro, Minor, Moderate, Motion, Move, Number, Rating, Ratio, Readings, Release, Remember, Sand, Scientist, Seismic, Shake, Sizes, Strength, Strong, Supplies, Systems, Time, Tons, Water, Waves

Yesterday's Answer: Stone Town

The WONDERWORD MILLENNIUM SERIES #1 can be ordered by calling toll-free, 1-800-642-6480. Order on line at wonderword...universaluclick.com. (Contains 100 puzzles, including 20 20x20 puzzles.)

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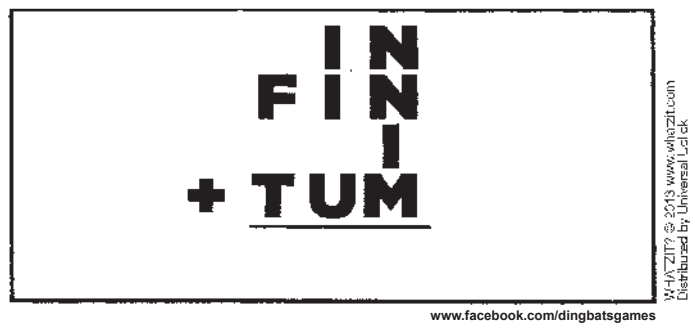

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Pacers get even with Miami after 99-92 win

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—The Indiana Pacers played desperate Tuesday night.

They relentlessly attacked the basket, continually won the battle for loose balls, dominated the glass and, yes, turned the tables on Miami yet again.

Roy Hibbert finished with 23 points and 12 rebounds, Lance Stephenson added 20 points, and the Pacers closed the game on a 16-6 run to pull away from the defending NBA champs for a 99-92 victory.

Just like that, the Eastern Conference finals are tied at 2 and the pressure has swung back to Miami.

"We're never going to give up. We're relentless," Hibbert said after another big game. "All those guys in there, they believe we can win. No matter what all the analysts or whoever says anything, they count us out, those guys in the locker room were ready to play and we went out and played our hearts out."

Hibbert will get no argument from coach Frank Vogel, who challenged his team to bring it or go down swinging.

Indiana scored with punch after punch.

The Pacers revved up the crowd with an opening 11-0 run, got the Heat in foul trouble and answered every challenge Miami posed in a physical game that had bodies flying, tempers flaring and LeBron James stunned after fouling out of a playoff game for only the second time in his career.

Indiana believed this was the only way it could get back into the best-of-seven series after giving home-court advantage back to Miami two nights earlier.

The players promised to treat Game 4 as if they were playing a decisive seventh game, and it showed.

An angry Paul George uncharacteristically smacked the floor after being called for a foul in the third quarter, leading to a technical foul on Vogel that seemed to get Indiana refocused. The defense continually contested shots by James and his high-scoring teammates. The four-time MVP finished with 24 points but was only 8 of 18 from the field. And Indiana reverted to its more typical style, holding a 49-30 rebounding advantage and outscoring Miami 50-32 in the paint.

"That's what the series is about, who can get to who and do it for longer periods of time. They kept us out of the paint," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "We'll just have to do it better."

The Heat now face a stunning must-win scenario Thursday night in Game 5 or come back to Indy for Game 6 fighting for their playoff lives.

Over the next 48 hours, the Heat will try to figure out what went wrong in a game full of oddities.

Chris Bosh crashed to the court clutching his right knee after a first-half collision. In the second half, he limped to the locker room after appearing to twist his right ankle on a foul call but returned a few minutes later trying to shake off the injury.

AP

Indiana Pacers' Roy Hibbert shoots over Miami Heat's Joel Anthony during the first half of Game 4 of the NBA basketball Eastern Conference finals, Tuesday, May 28, 2013, in Indianapolis.

Dwyane Wade limped noticeably during the first half and wound up in foul trouble, too.

Miami's three All-Stars were a dismal 14 of 39 from the field, even though James spent part of the night being defended by Stephenson because of George's foul trouble. Bosh finished with seven points, Wade with 16 and no Miami starter had more than six rebounds.

"We had them right where we wanted them, but every time we would get a stop, especially in the fourth quarter, we didn't come up with the rebound," Bosh said. "It was there for us, but we didn't capitalize."

Nobody was more frustrated than James, who was called for a technical foul in the first quarter and four fouls over the final 12 minutes—the last an offensive foul. After walking from one end of the court to the Miami bench, James sat disbelievingly on a press table and spent the final 56 seconds mumbling to the officials.

Again he promised to make amends.

"It was a couple of fouls that I didn't feel like were fouls, personal fouls on me, but that's how the game goes sometimes," James said.

Miami had its chances, but Indiana simply refused to back down.

When the Heat used a 9-0 run to take a 60-54 lead early in the third quarter, Indiana answered immediately with a 10-0 run to regain the lead. When James committed an offensive foul with 2 seconds left in the third quarter, his first turnover since the end of Game 2, the Pacers got a buzzer-beating 3-pointer from Stephenson to make it 77-70.

When the Heat rallied in the fourth, charging back from an 81-72 deficit to take an 86-83 lead, the Pacers answered again. George drew a foul on James and wound up tying the score on a three-point play with 5:38 to go.

Ray Allen broke the tie with a 3 from the left wing late in the shot clock, but Indiana answered again. This time, David West made 1 of 2 free throws, Stephenson knocked down a 19-footer, Hibbert scored on a putback and then completed a three-point play to end the 7-0 run that gave Indiana a 94-89 lead with 90 seconds left.

Miami never got another chance to tie it.

"I just felt the guys showed a lot of fight," West said. "We've got a group of guys on this team that are full of heart. A tough group, willing to step up to the challenge. We knew this was a make-or-break game for us."

NBA BRIEFS

Suns connect with their past by hiring Hornacek

PHOENIX (AP)—One of the most popular Phoenix Suns players from the franchise's past will guide the team to an uncertain future. At the news conference on Tuesday announcing his hiring as Suns coach, Jeff Hornacek spoke at length about his readiness for the job and the influences that will guide him. "I've always felt that I've been a coach," he said. "My dad was a coach, so I've been around basketball since I was 5 years old." Hornacek played the first six of his 14 NBA seasons with the Suns. He was traded to Philadelphia in the Charles Barkley deal, then went to Utah, where he found great success as the backcourt teammate of John Stockton. Hornacek retired from playing to spend more time with his family, then eased into coaching, first as a shooting instructor in Utah, then since 2011 as a full-time assistant with the Jazz. His coaching style, he said, would be heavily influenced by his days playing for Cotton Fitzsimmons in Phoenix and Jerry Sloan in Utah. "Hopefully, I can take Jerry's toughness, Cotton's enthusiasm and confidence-building and blend them together," Hornacek said, "and become a great coach like some of the great coaches that have been here in the past." He went through a "who's who" list of the best Suns players in the past, from Gar Heard to Walter Davis, Alvin Adams, Kevin Johnson, Barkley and Steve Nash. "There's been great success here over the years," Hornacek said.

Hawks pick Budenholzer to replace Drew as coach

ATLANTA (AP)—The Atlanta Hawks hired longtime Spurs assistant Mike Budenholzer as their head coach on Tuesday, giving the team another link to San Antonio's championship tradition. General manager Danny Ferry called on his past experience with San Antonio to select Budenholzer to replace Larry Drew as coach. Drew's contract expires in June following three seasons as coach. The Hawks have scheduled a news conference for Budenholzer on Wednesday in Atlanta. The Hawks lost to Indiana in the first round of the playoffs. It was the team's sixth straight postseason appearance but Ferry is expected to continue his dramatic makeover of the team after trading Joe Johnson and Marvin Williams in his first year as general manager. The Hawks say Budenholzer will continue serving as the Spurs' top assistant through the NBA finals. The Spurs completed a four-game sweep of Memphis in the Western Conference finals on Monday. Ferry came to the Hawks last year after two years as vice president of basketball operations for the Spurs. With Budenholzer, Ferry now has his own coach after inheriting Drew. "He has an incredible basketball acumen and has a keen awareness of the league and what it takes to be successful," Ferry said Tuesday in a statement released by the team. "His experience and four championships over the last 17 years provide a tremendous foundation for his leadership of our team."

Sources: Bobcats hire Lakers assistant Clifford

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Michael Jordan felt he needed a head coach with a little more NBA experience this time around to improve his struggling Charlotte Bobcats. The former NBA superstar and current owner believes he's found one in Steve Clifford. Clifford, a long-time NBA assistant, has been hired away from the Los Angeles Lakers by the Bobcats before the Milwaukee Bucks could make a play for him. The decision comes after Jordan's experiment with former St. John's assistant Mike Dunlap failed miserably this past season. Jordan fired Dunlap in April after one season with a 21-61 record. Two people familiar with the situation said Monday that Clifford had agreed to a three-year contact. They spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the announcement has not been made public. Clifford has worked as an assistant in New York, Houston, Orlando and Los Angeles, but has never been a head coach at the NBA level. He has worked under both Jeff and Stan Van Gundy and will become the sixth coach of the Bobcats since 2006-07. The Bobcats made the move to hire Clifford one day before he was slated for a second interview with the Bucks for their coaching vacancy. Clifford came to Los Angeles with Dwight Howard from the Magic and was retained for the 2013-14 season as an assistant coach. However, the Lakers granted him permission to interview with other teams.

After waiting out rain, Djokovic starts French bid

PARIS (AP)—Novak Djokovic spent the better part of a rainy Tuesday at the French Open wondering when—and even whether—he would wind up playing his first-round match at the only Grand Slam tournament he's yet to win.

Unlike Wimbledon and the Australian Open, Roland Garros does not have a roof at any court.

Unlike the U.S. Open, though, at least there is a definitive timeline to build one.

Djokovic is thrilled about that forthcoming addition in Paris, even if it won't come until 2018. He also can't wait for them to install artificial lights at the French Open, which is supposed to happen sooner. Both of those improvements would have contributed to a more stress-free evening for the man ranked and seeded No. 1, who slipped and slid his way along the red clay to a 7-6 (5), 6-4, 7-5 victory over David Goffin in the first round.

"It was a difficult day, because we have been waiting for hours and hours. I think I warmed up five or six times today," Djokovic said. "In these conditions ... you need to adjust your game and tactics, because it's quite different than comparing to the conditions when it's dry and sunny."

Even though his match against the 58th-ranked Goffin, a Belgian who was one of the revelations at Roland Garros a year ago, was the second to be played on Court Philippe Chatrier, they did not begin until after 6:30 p.m. They finished as light was fading shortly before 9 p.m.

"It was a long day," Djokovic said.

At least he got to play.

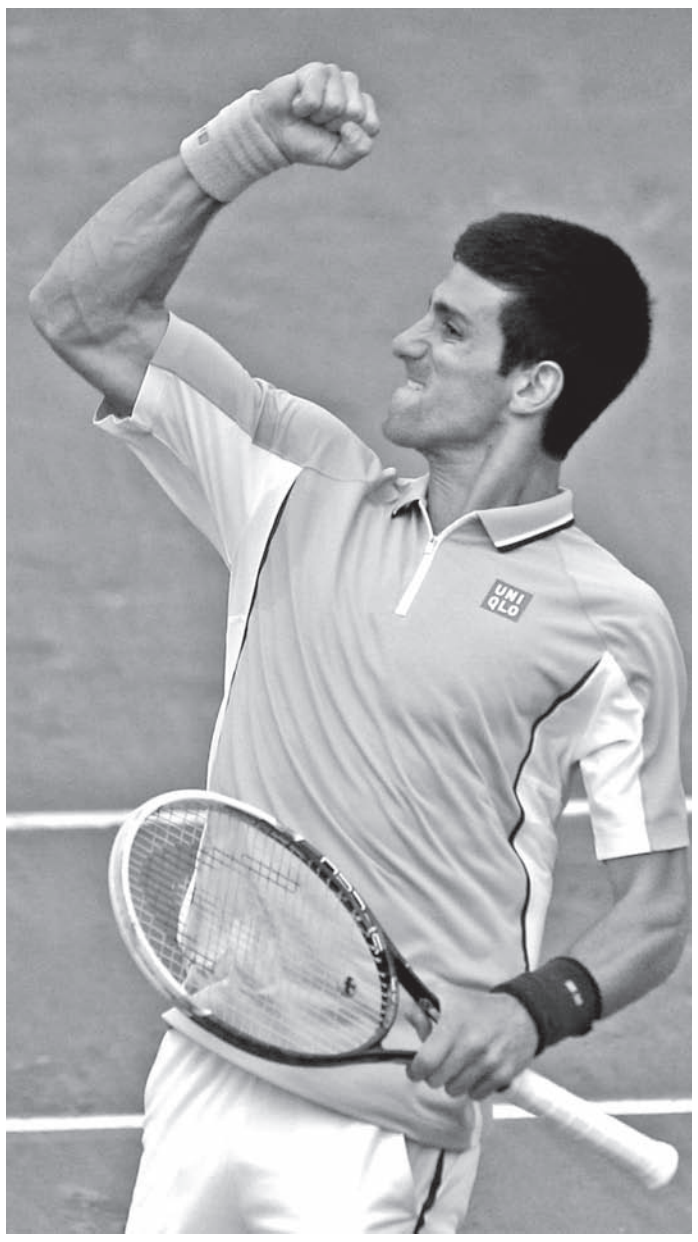
Because of showers that began in the morning, there was a delay of more than 2 1/2 hours at the start. Then, after only 1 1/2 hours of action, arrived another stop of more than an hour. All told, only 26 of 40 scheduled singles matches were completed, three were suspended in progress, and organizers wound up postponing 11 others entirely. That means players such as Victoria Azarenka, the reigning Australian Open champion, will be slated for first-round action Wednesday, the fourth day of the tournament (when, by the way, the forecast calls for more rain).

That sets up a situation where Azarenka, for example, would need to win seven matches across 11 days to take home the trophy, while 2002 champion Serena Williams—who got to begin the tournament Sunday and is supposed to play in the second round Wednesday—would have her seven matches spread over 14 days if she goes the distance.

Among the winners Tuesday were 2010 French Open runner-up and 2011 U.S. Open champion Sam Stosur, who beat 42-year-old Kimiko Date-Krumm of Japan 6-0, 6-2.

"It was spitting a little bit when we went out there," Stosur said. "You think, `Oh, are we going to start or are we not?' Lucky for me, I was able to finish the match before this last downpour came."

Another Australian, Bernard Tomic—whose father was barred from Roland Garros after being accused this month of head-butting Tomic's hitting partner—stopped because of a torn right hamstring while trailing Victor Hanescu 7-5, 7-6 (8), 2-1. Three other men retired during matches: No. 28 Florian Mayer (right thigh), Alejandro Falla (stomach problems), Simone Bolelli (right wrist).



AP

Serbia's Novak Djokovic reacts as he defeats Belgium's David Goffin during their first round match in the French Open tennis tournament at the Roland Garros Stadium Tuesday, May 28, 2013, in Paris.

No. 9 Stanislas Wawrinka, No. 12 Tommy Haas and No. 16 Philipp Kohlschreiber and No. 26 Grigor Dimitrov advanced, along with 20-year-old American Jack Sock in his French Open debut.

If Dimitrov - he and Maria Sharapova are an item, so he was asked Tuesday about dealing with paparazzi - reaches the third round, he could face Djokovic. That would be an intriguing matchup, given that Dimitrov defeated Djokovic on clay at Madrid three weeks ago.

"This is the kind of matches I'd always want to play in," Dimitrov said. "I feel good on the big courts and playing against good players."

Djokovic found Goffin in possession of that same attitude.

In 2012, Goffin got into the French Open field as a "lucky loser"—someone who loses in qualifying but is put in the main draw because another player withdrew—and made it all the way to the fourth round. That's when Goffin got to face Roger Federer, his idol, and even took a set off the owner of the most career major titles before losing the match.

"He has a good chance to have a good future," Djokovic said. "He likes playing here, obviously. He likes playing on a big stage."

Perhaps. But Tuesday's key moment came in the first-set tiebreaker, with Goffin serving at 5-all. After he faulted once, a fan yelled, "Allez, David!" The 22-year-old Goffin then proceeded to miss his second serve, too, for a double-fault that gave Djokovic a set point.

Goffin looked in the direction of the offending shout with palms up, as if to say, "What did you do that for?!"

"That's what happens sometimes. When you play in Davis Cup, you see that on every serve, basically," Goffin said. "Anyway, it was up to me to focus my mind. This is the type of thing that can happen, and can happen to anybody. So tough luck."

His backhand into the net ceded the set to Djokovic, who had won fewer total points until then, 39-36.

Djokovic lost to seven-time French Open champion Rafael Nadal in last year's final. That ended Djokovic's 27-match Grand Slam winning streak and, with it, his attempt to earn a fourth consecutive major championship.

Now Djokovic—who has won the Australian Open four times, and the U.S. Open and Wimbledon once each—really would love to pick up his first trophy at Roland Garros to complete a career Grand Slam. Before the French Open began, he called it "the No. 1 priority of my year."

He returned to that theme Tuesday: "I really want to do well here. I have high hopes for myself, and there is no secret about it."

As Goffin walked toward the locker room after the match ended, Djokovic stopped what he was doing to join the crowd in applauding.

Then it was Djokovic's turn to speak French to the fans during an interview, a post-match ritual that's become de rigueur this week. Williams and Nadal did it, too (as did Federer, who has for years).

"I really wanted to finish tonight," Djokovic said, "although I know the crowd wanted to watch a little longer."

Lee baffles Red Sox in Phillies' 3-1 victory

BOSTON (AP)—Cliff Lee allowed four hits over eight innings and Jonathan Papelbon earned his first save at Fenway Park as a Red Sox opponent on Tuesday, leading the Philadelphia Phillies to a 3-1 victory over Boston.

Michael Young and Domonic Brown homered for the Phillies, and Erik Kratz singled in the tiebreaking run in the seventh inning to snap Boston's four-game winning streak.

Lee (6-2) allowed a first-inning run and then retired 22 of the next 23 batters to win his fourth consecutive decision. He struck out eight to match his season high and walked none.

Rays 7, Marlins 6

In St. Petersburgh, Florida, Desmond Jennings drove in the winning run with a two-out single in the bottom of the ninth inning, lifting the Rays to a victory over the Marlins.

The Rays came back from an early 4-0 deficit and won their third in a row. Miami lost its seventh straight game.

Reds 8, Indians 2

In Cincinatti, Xavier Paul singled home a pair of runs in the first inning as the Reds completed a two-game home sweep of the Indians.

The intrastate rivals headed to Cleveland for two more games. The Indians lead the all-time series 42-41.

The Reds have won 14 of their past 17 games overall, leaving them with the second-best record in the majors at 33-19. They trail NL Central-leading St. Louis.

Braves 7, Blue Jays 6, 10 innings

In Toronto, Brian McCann hit two home runs, including a solo shot in the 10th inning that lifted the Braves over the Blue Jays 7-6.

McCann and rookie Evan Gattis hit back-to-back homers off Ramon Ortiz in the sixth, giving the Braves a 6-5 lead. The Blue Jays tied it on J.P. Arencibia's RBI double in the seventh.

Rockies 2, Astros 1

In Houston, Michael Cuddyer had three hits, including an RBI single in the ninth inning that gave the Colorado Rockies a win over the Astros.

Troy Tulowitzki doubled off Houston closer Jose Veras (0-4) to start the ninth and advanced to third on a wild pitch. Cuddyer followed with his single, which sailed just out of reach of leaping third baseman Matt Dominguez.

Cardinals 4, Royals 1

In Kansas City, Missouri, Carlos Beltran hit a two-run homer against his former team and rookie Tyler Lyons made another dazzling start as the Cardinals beat Kansas City for the Royals' 10th consecutive home defeat.

The only two hits that Lyons (2-0) allowed over seven innings were to Billy Butler — a two-out RBI double in the first inning and a bloop single in the seventh.

Mets 2, Yankees 1

In New York, David Wright and Lucas Duda hit RBI singles off Mariano Rivera in the ninth inning as the Mets rallied past the Yankees to beat baseball's career saves leader only hours after honoring him at Citi Field.

Matt Harvey and Hiroki Kuroda locked up in an entertaining pitchers' duel that went to the ninth with the Yankees leading 1-0 on Lyle Overbay's run-scoring single. But all three batters to face Rivera (0-1) got hits, handing him the first blown save of his farewell season in 19 chances.

Nationals 9, Orioles 3

In Washington, Adam LaRoche homered twice and drove in four runs as the Nationals enjoyed a rare offensive outburst at the expense of the Orioles.

LaRoche, Tyler Moore and Roger Bernadina connected off Orioles rookie Kevin Gausman (0-2). LaRoche added a solo shot in the eighth off Troy Patton.

It added up to Washington's highest-scoring performance since a 10-3 win over Miami on April 15.

Pirates 1, Tigers 0, 11 innings

In Detroit, Neil Walker ended a lengthy pitching duel with a home run in the 11th inning, lifting the Pirates over the Tigers.

The game was scoreless until Walker—the brother-in-law of Tigers center fielder Don Kelly—homered off Jose Ortega (0-2) with one out in the top of the 11th. Former Tigers reliever Jason Grilli pitched the bottom half for his 21st save in 21 tries, striking out Torii Hunter, Miguel Cabrera and Prince Fielder in succession.

Dodgers 3, Angels 0

In Los Angeles, Ryu Hyun-jin pitched a two-hitter for his first complete game in the major leagues, Luis Cruz hit his first homer of the season and the Dodgers beat the Angels in the second game of the Freeway Series.

Ryu (6-2) struck out seven and walked none. The left-hander from South Korea retired 19 consecutive batters during one stretch. His six victories lead all rookie pitchers in the majors, while his 71 2-3 innings pitched lead all rookies this season.

Padres 6, Mariners 1

In Seattle, Edinson Volquez pitched into the eighth inning and Jedd Gyorko and Alexi Amarista each homered, leading the Padres over the Mariners.

The teams split the two-game set in Seattle, but will be right back at it on Wednesday in San Diego for two more games.

Athletics 6, Giants 3

In Oakland, California, Derek Norris hit a two-run homer in the second inning and Jarrod Parker pitched seven strong innings as the Athletics beat the Giants for their fifth straight victory.

Adam Rosales homered in the eighth for the A's to snap an 0-for-24 funk since he connected against Kansas City on May 17.

Twins 6, Brewers 5

In Milwaukee, pinch-hitter Eduardo Escobar hit a sacrifice fly with one out in the 14th inning, lifting the Twins to a victory over the Brewers.

Jean Segura went 6 for 7—all singles—to raise his batting average to an NL-leading .366 but Milwaukee lost for the fourth straight time and 20th in 25 games.

Repeat winners in May Masters' team event

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The tested quartet of Raul Dumapit, Percy Omechelang, Paul Pangelinan, and Alex Castro ruled the team event in the 31st CNMI-SBC May Masters Tournament held over the weekend at the Saipan Bowling Center.

The group, which won last year's competition, made it two in a row after combining for 2,381 pinfalls and beating the 2,325 of Raymond Angeles, Simon Manacop, Richard Leong, and Rusty Musca. Percy Omechelang lifted his team to back-to-back championship after contributing 654 pinfalls. He had 173 in Game 1 and finished strong in the last two games with his 200-plus pinfall performance (228 and 253).

Pangelinan also carded over 200 pinfalls in Game 2 (267) to go with his 181s in Games 1 and 3 for the second best score (629) in the group, Alex Castro came in next with his 567 pinfalls (200, 169, and 198). Dumapit was last year's top bowler on team (628), but this time got only 531 (178, 181, and 172).

Meanwhile, Manacop, who had a squad-best 645 pinfalls, was the lone bowler in the team event to register 200-plus pinfalls in all three games with his 210, 230, and 205. However, his group had to settle for second place after two of his teammates failed to reach the 600 mark. Angeles gathered only 534 (188, 184, and 162), while Musca finished with 535 (168, 164, 203). Richard Leong knocked down more than 200 pins in the first two games (213 and 221), but slowed down in the last game (177) to collect 611.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

From left, Paul Pangelinan, Alex Castro, Raul Dumapit, and Percy Omechelang, pose with their championship trophies in the team event during the awards ceremony for the 31st CNMI-SBC May Masters Tournament last Sunday at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

Rounding out the Top 3 was the Zapanta brothers-led team, which fell four pinfalls short of grabbing the runner-up honors with its 2,322 pinfalls. Raymond Zapanta gathered the team's best 625 pinfalls (229, 203, and 193), Raphael had 591 (218, 180, and 193), and Ruselle carded 557 (192, 222, and 139). Robert Talavera completed the team and recorded 549 (178, 156, and 215).

Two other squads joined the team competition with the quartet of Ariel Dumapit (482), Bernard Paraiso (554), Jorge Soledad (490), and Ramir de Leon (577) finishing fourth (2,103). Ronald Batac (548), Lito Teodoro (574), Roger De Guzman (485), and Edward Baluyan (480) came in at fifth with their 2,087 pinfalls.

In the women's division, last year's champions also prevailed this season with Elena Soll, Yho Villavicencio, Lala Taitano, and Tess Fabie collecting 1,936 pinfalls to edge the 1,901 of Sue Ellis, Corma Muna, Maridel Camacho, and Gloria Omechelang.

Taitano led the foursome's win with her 527 pinfalls (192, 167, and 168), Fabie contributed 511 (168, 180, and 183), and Villavicencio (147, 144, and 177) and Soll (144, 143, and 143) added 468 and 430, respectively.

Five other squads participated in the team event with the foursome of Omechelang, Carol McKenzie, Fabie, and Maridel Camacho completing the Top 3 after tallying 1,860 pinfalls.

King's slips past GHD in overtime

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

King's swept its last three games in the regular season of the 2013 DLX Invitational Basketball League after outlasting GHD, 67-63, in an overtime game last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

King's finished Bracket B with an even 3-3 record for a tie for second place with Mawati and the Sexy Boys. These three teams and the winner of last night's make-up match between Camor and GHD will battle for second place and the outright quarterfinals seat. The winner will be decided by a quotient system and will join Bracket B top finisher Freestyle (4-2) to the quarterfinals. The three losers and Yuchiro (2-4) will then fight for the two remaining quarterfinals tickets in the first round of the playoffs.

The King's-GHD match went in overtime after Emmanuel James Bautista canned the game-tying basket, 61-all. King's then was left with 13 seconds to hit the game-winning shot, but wasted precious time dribbling the ball and when Bryle Alegre drove and made the basket time had already expired, sending the match into extension.

In overtime, GHD was scoreless for more than two minutes and was held to 2 points off Jun Javier's field goal, while Jarmark De Guzman canned back-to-back baskets, and Paul Villanueva added the insurance for King's in the closing seconds.

De Guzman paced King's with his 15 points, while Alegre and Ralph Rivera added 12 and 10, respectively.

Jason Bahillo led GHD with his 24 points, making three triples in the opening period to lift GHD to an 18-11 lead. He drilled two more shots from downtown, as GHD kept the upper hand at halftime, 35-31.

GHD then lost the driver's seat in the third, as Alegre scored 8 of his total points in that canto to force a standoff, 46-all, and the match ended in a deadlock anew in regulation with Bautista scoring four of GHD's last 6 points in the final canto.

Meanwhile, San Roque (4-2) was awarded a win via forfeiture in Bracket A after a no-show from Wanted Sponsor.

King's 67 – De Guzman 15, Alegre 12, River 10, Villanueva 9, Barrios 9, Hernaez 8.

GHD 63 – Bahillo 24, Villanueva 12, Aranda 9, Bautista 6, Tudela 4, Ferrer 3, Javier 2, Raquero 1.

Scoring by quarters: 11-18, 31-35, 46-46, 61-61, 67-63.

RAYS

From Page 28

delivered the goods for Southern to bring the MISO soccer championship trophy back to the Rays. Joining Lee and Dickenson on the champion squad are Zhi Peng Li, Paul Mariano, Riggz Awit, Darren Hocog, Jake Lee, David Yang, Scott Kim, Woo Seok Choi, Brian Lee, Seya Eda, Joel Jang, Jeffery Palacios, Enrico Del Rosario, and Jason Lee.

Hae Sung Lee scored in the third minute for the first goal in the title match, making a touch volley shot, according to coach Eric Cooke. The play started off a corner kick from Brian Lee with Li feeding Hae Sung Lee for the finish.

Southern went on to keep the lead at the end of the first half, as it continued to play strong defense. Then midway in the second half, Dakota Hall broke the deadlock with a penalty kick. Hall made a loop and Dickenson jumped for a catch, but could not hang on to the leather.

After that defensive miscue, Dickenson redeemed himself in the 62nd minute, also connecting on a penalty shot.

"He drilled it to the top right corner. When we scored in the third minute I felt really good at that point. However SIS is a great team and I knew that one goal would not be enough to win the game. When we scored in the 62nd minute to take the lead, 2-1, I felt confident that we would win the game at that point," Cooke said.

His wards did not disappoint, as Southern defenders hounded SIS attackers in the remaining 28 minutes to keep the lead and take the win.

The Rays' steady team defense was one of the factors in their title win and unbeaten record this season. Southern swept all six games in the regular season and then shut out Kagman High School in the semifinals, 5-0, before dethroning SIS to maintain an immaculate slate.

"Before the finals. I told the boys to just go out and play the way they have been playing all season long. They needed to utilize their skills and use quick short passes while working their way from the defensive third to the offensive third. Also I told them to continue to play team and tenacious defense," said Cooke, adding that communication and having high team spirit also played crucial roles in their title conquest.

Besides winning the championship, Southern also earned the distinction of having the most players to score goals this season. Of the Rays' 32 goals, at least one each came from 12 of their 16 players. Li scored the most with his six goals. The newly crowned champions then allowed only five goals with Dickenson giving up three.

TSUNAMI

From Page 28

Saipan's Roxanne Mikel, who had only 37 points. Swimmers received points based on how they finished in the various races in their age group.

The 9-year-old Gauran finished first in the 100m breaststroke, 200m individual medley, and 50m freestyle, second in the 200m freestyle and 50m breaststroke and fourth in the 50m backstroke.

Duplicating Gauran's first place finish were teammates Kensuke Kimura, Hiroto and Ryuto Yanai, and Miku Tammy, while Jun Tenorio Takumi Sugie and Angel De Jesus made it to the Top 5.

Kimura triumphed in a close battle in the 17 to 18 age group after getting 65 points. He won by only five points against runner-up and Tsunami Guam's Soujyu Usui (60 points). Kazuki Aricayos also from Tsunami Guam rounded out the Top 3 with his 53 points. Kimura beat the two Tsunami Guam bets after finishing first in the 200m backstroke, 200m butterfly, 50m butterfly, 800m freestyle, and 100m backstroke, second in the 50m and 100m breaststroke, and third in the 200m IM.

In the 11 to 12 age group, Tsunami Saipan had a sweep with Hiroto Yanai and Tammy clinching the boys and girls crowns. Hiroto also had a tough win, collecting 65 points, just two points more than Tanner Poppe (63). The Tsunami Saipan swimmer was first in the 50m and 100m backstroke, 400m, 800m, 1,500n freestyle, runner-up in the 50m and 200m freestyle, and third in the 100m freestyle.

Tammy got her first win in her new age group after receiving 69 points. She ruled the 100m and 200m backstroke, 50m and 200m butterfly, 200m and 800m freestyle, and 200m IM and placed third in the 50m freestyle.

Tsunami Saipan also earned a sweep in the 9 to 10 age group, as Ryuto Yanai reigned supreme in the boys division with his 68 points, 15 points ahead of Tsunami Guam's Jimi Hendrix (53). Ryuto collected points from his first place finish in the 200m IM, 50m backstroke, 50m, 100m and 200m butterfly, and 200m freestyle, and runner-up in the 50m and 100m freestyle.

Meanwhile, Juhn Tenorio placed second in the boys U8 division with his 56 points, Sugie was ranked third in the 13 to 14 age group after tallying 54 points, while De Jesus gathered 53 markers to take the No. 4 spot in the girls 13 to 14 division.

2013 Masters Basketball League 50A Finals

PHOTOS BY ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Still Can Do It's Manny Sitchon pulls up for a short jumper against JWS' Romy Bernardo during the fourth quarter of their title game in the 50A division of the 2013 Masters Basketball League against last Friday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

Referee Jess Pabula calls a foul on JWS' Romy Bernardo, partly hidden, after tripping Manny Sitchon in a loose ball play.

Still Can Do It's George Villasan pulls up for a running jumper against JWS' Boy Garcia.

JWS' Nomer Gamboa drives against Still Can Do It's Ed Manalili, left, and Rufino Aguon.

Still Can Do It's Ed Manalili fakes off the defense of a JWS player.

JWS' Boy Garcia pulls up for a baseline jumper.

Still Can Do It's John Deleon Guerrero challenges the shot of a JWS player.

Still Can Do It's Dave Camacho rams into to the defense of Obet Valdez.

JWS' Romy Bernardo reaches in for the ball and is called for a foul on Still Can Do It's Manny Sitchon.

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Rays regain soccer championship

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Saipan Southern High School capped its perfect season in the 2012-2013 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization with a 2-1 title win over Saipan International School last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

The victory also allowed the Manta Rays to reclaim the championship they lost to the Geckos last season and gave them their third title in the last four years. Southern topped the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 seasons of the high school division before SIS snapped the streak last year with a 1-0 win off Jehn Joyner's goal in the second half.

In their finals rematch, Joyner was a marked man, while Hae Sung Lee and Ethan Dickenson

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NORMAN DEL ROSARIO
Southern High School's Zhi Peng Li, left, is tightly defended by a Saipan International School player during the first half of their title game in the MISO soccer league last Saturday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

5 Tsunami Saipan swimmers prevail in Guam tournament

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Tsunami Saipan swimmers pose for a group photo after the competition in the 2013 Guam Championships last weekend at the Hagatna Pool.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tsunami Saipan Swimming Center got five high-point awards in the 2013 Guam Championships held over the weekend at the Hagatna Pool.

Sophia Gauran gave Tsunami Saipan one of the five high-point plums after having a winning debut in the Guam meet. She topped the girls 9 to10 age group after earning 64 points and finishing way ahead of runner-up and Tsunami

See TSUNAMI on Page 26

SSC bets stand out in Cocos Crossing

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Three Saipan Swim Club members notched three first place finishes in the 23rd International Invitational Cocos Crossing 2.5 Miler held last Sunday in the waters off Merizo Pier in Agana, Guam.

Victoria Chentsova earned the group's most impressive win, placing first in the female division and besting 90 other swimmers. She timed in at 55:39 to beat Santa Rita's Sara Haack (56:07) and Hagatna's Pilar Shimizu (56:11). Chentsova also finished 12th overall out of 233 swimmers. Hagatna's Benjamin Schulte was the top finisher after submitting 41:03.

In the boys 9 to 10 age group, SSC had a 1-2 finish with Taiga Sato clocking in at 1:12:17 to prevail over teammate Lennosuke Suzuki (1:12:26). The two SSC members made it to the shore way ahead of third placer and Tumon's Mark Imazu, who posted 1:24:31.

SSC's third first place finish came in the men's 40 to 49 with masters swimmer Colin Thompson winning over 23 other swimmers in his age group. Thompson recorded 55:43 and was the lone swimmer in his division to complete the 2.5-mile race under one hour. Bill Breeze came in at second with his 1:01:35, while Michael McGinnis rounded out the Top 3 after logging 1:03:28.

Two other SSC swimmers joined the weekend race. Kento Akimaru placed only fourth in the 11 to 14 age group, but his 55:17 was the fastest time among the SSC bets and he missed the podium by only five seconds, as third placer Tanner Poppe clocked in at 55:12. Tommy Imazu ruled the field with his 48:52, beating Justin Fell (49:24). Christian Villacrusis also competed in the same age group and debuted in the ocean swim with a decent time of 1:12:07, ahead of three other Guam swimmers.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Saipan Swim Club swimmers pose for a group photo at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool a few days before they left for Guam to join last weekend's tournament.